

# The Sketch

## Christmas Number







## A GREAT TOFFEE WITH A GREAT REPUTATION

To millions of little boys and girls the chief delight of Christmas-time is to revel to their hearts' desire in an abundance of SHARP'S SUPER-KREEM TOFFEE. Super-Kreem, with its rich, creamy flavour, is made to give delight—but not delight alone; it is a pure, wholesome food—a nourishing, sustaining addition to the daily diet. Give yourself, your friends, and the little ones the King of All Sweets—buy plenty of Super-Kreem.

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per  
¼-lb.

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The Largest Manufacturers of Toffee in the World.

*"It Speaks for Itself."*

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SUPER-KREEM  
TOFFEE**



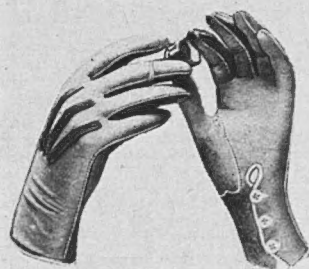


# Gorrings

## Yuletide Gift Suggestions

Reliable Gloves  
are always  
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Gifts.

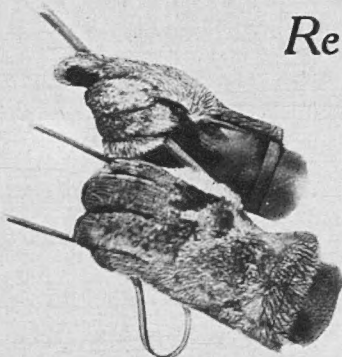
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G 103.

Ladies' 3 Button Gloves in Chevrete Suede (as sketch), French manufacture and perfect fitting. In Black, Drab, Beaver, Tan, or Slate. Special Value

8/11



G 111. Ladies' FUR GLOVES (as sketch) in Natural Coney with leather palms, and fleecy lined.

12/9

Wonderful Value

Also for Children.

Size 2 10/9

,, 3 &amp; 4 11/9

,, 5 &amp; 6 12/9



G 101.

Ladies' 2 - Button Buckskin Gloves with Boulton Thumbs (as sketch) made from stout selected skins, suitable for hard wear.

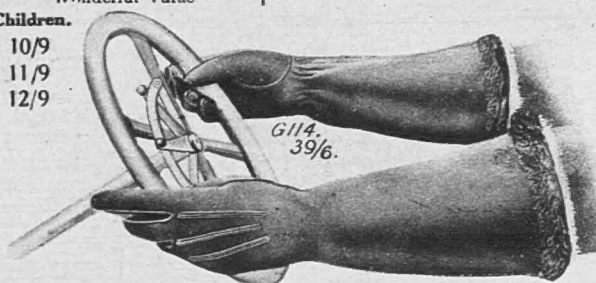
In Slate or Tan

12/9



G 107.  
Ladies' Real  
Kid Gloves,  
made from  
selected skins.

8-button Mousquetaire White only - - 9/11  
12-button Mousquetaire White only - - 14/9  
16-button Mousquetaire (as sketch) white only 18/9

G 114.  
39/6.

G 114. Ladies' 9-inch Super Buckskin GAUNTLETS (as sketch), lined throughout White Coney and trimmed real Otter.

39/6

In Slate or Tan.



G 112. Ladies' Fleecy Woollen GAUNTLETS (as sketch). In White, Black or Colours.

Special Value

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9

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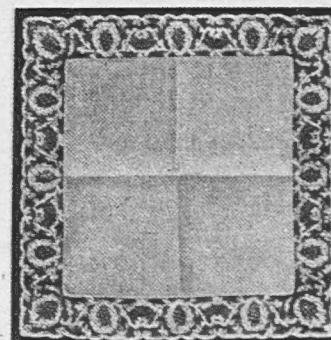
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#### BEAUTY PREPARATIONS

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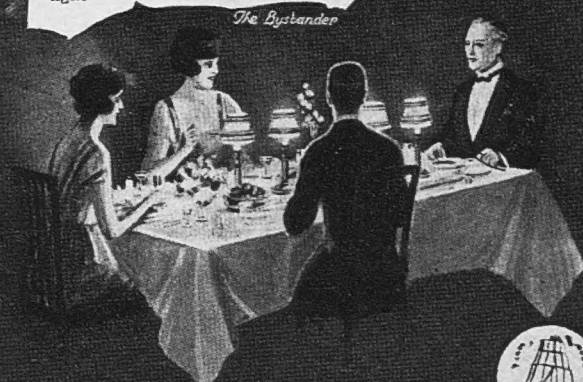
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The Bystander



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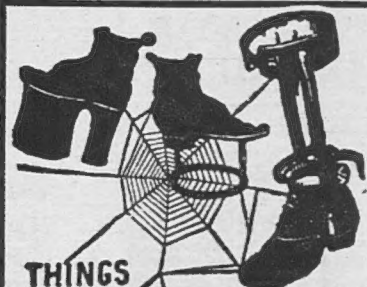
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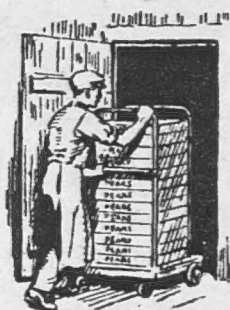
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BECAUSE IT IS  
PURIFIED AFTER  
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EVERY INDIVIDUAL  
TABLET



IS  
EXAMINED  
BEFORE  
LEAVING  
THE  
FACTORY



NOT ONLY IS IT  
SPECIALLY PURIFIED;  
FOR MANY MONTHS IT  
IS STORED IN WARM  
CELLARS UNTIL AGE HAS  
MELLOWED EACH INGRED-  
IENT TO GENTLENESS

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THE SAME STANDARD OF  
PERFECT PURITY DISTINGUISHES  
EACH KIND · NOT EVEN A TRACE  
OF COLOURING MATTER IS ADDED

*Pears* IS SOAP  
AND NOTHING BUT PURE SOAP



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Beautiful HATS  
FOR THE RIVIERA  
AND HE ANTICIPATES A  
REAL PRE-WAR SEASON.

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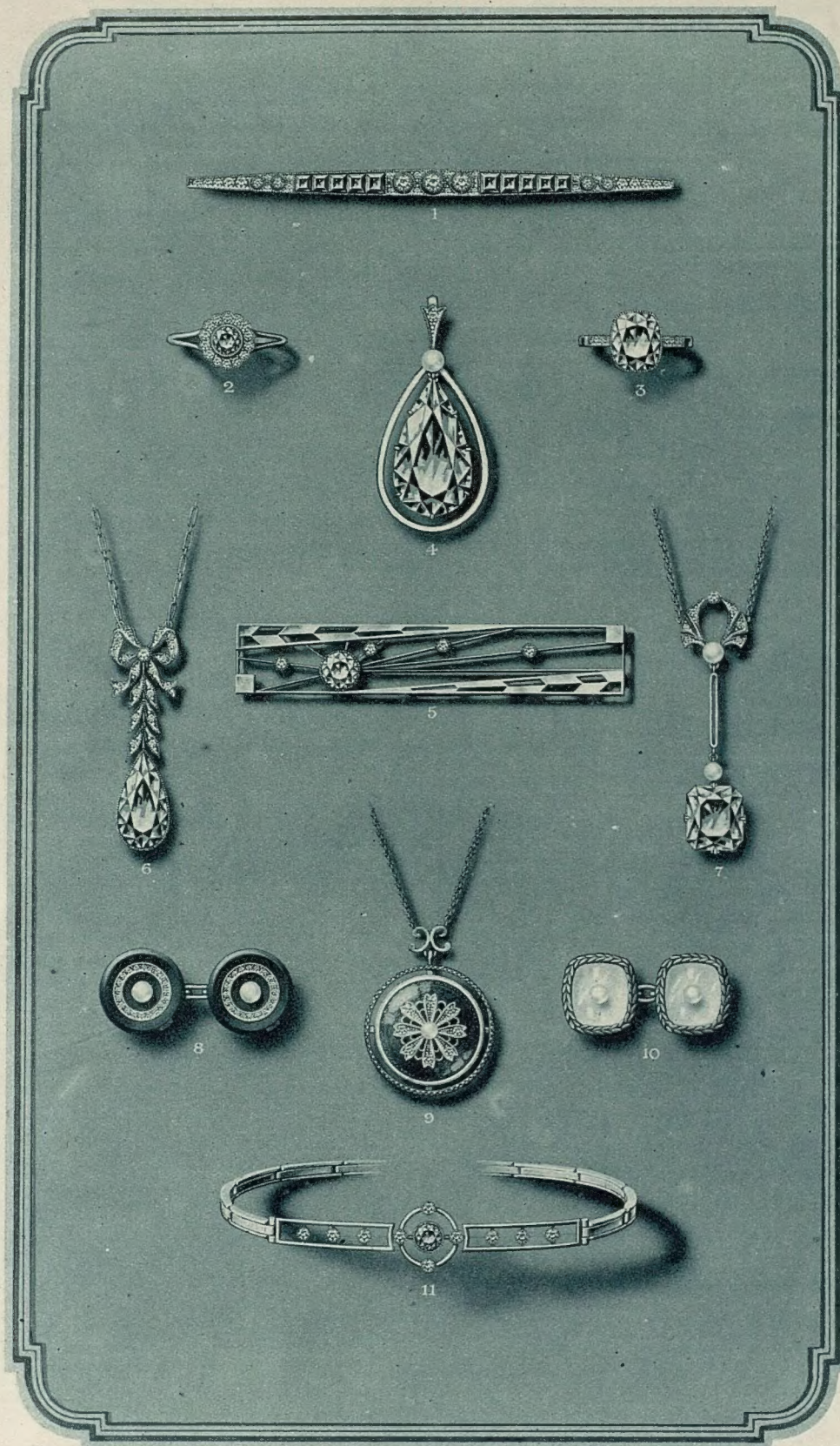
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The Sketch Christmas Number, 1921.





PUBLISHED BY THE SKETCH, 1921.

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## POWDER AND SHOT!

FROM THE PAINTING BY RAPHAËL KIRCHNER.



# THE SKETCH

## CHRISTMAS NUMBER



THE CHRISTMAS BALLET: THE PREMIÈRE DANSEUSE.

DRAWN BY JULIEN JACQUES LECLERC.





GLEAM of amber; sheen of jade: It really was a pretty thing, thought Diana Lancing, as, head bent over slim white fingers, she carefully examined the necklace. Clear orange amber, each bead separated from its fellow by a tiny ring of jade and three great blocks of jade, the last one quaintly cut with Chinese characters, and with a long silk tassel hanging from it.

It had arrived from Hong Kong that morning, and Diana mentally congratulated Billy Fellowes on his taste. Several sheets of thin parchment, yellow with age, and covered with Chinese writing, seemingly torn from a book of some kind, had come with it, and Billy had written, "The chain was bought wrapped in these sheets—poems, I believe: something about lilies and lotus-blossoms. It is all part of some loot that came down from Peking in 1900, and was found in an old lacquer chest. The old man I bought them from says they belonged to a Chinese lady called Hsin Li Hua, or Heart of the Plum Blossom, who lived two hundred years ago, and was killed by order of her husband, the Manchu Emperor of those days."

Diana Lancing was tall and slim and fair, and as she sat in the old corner window with the light on golden hair and golden beads, she made a lovely picture. Her thoughts went back to Billy out there in Hong Kong with his regiment. Dear old Billy, who wrote to her every week! She really did love him—she was sure of it; but there was Sir John Hartrell to think of, with his £20,000 a year, and his yacht and Hartrell Towers, and many other things besides. True, Sir John was forty-five, and could not be called handsome—in fact, she often felt a shudder of disgust when he came near her. His fat round face and tendency to *embonpoint* were not calculated to inspire love in any feminine breast. Still, there were these other considerations to be weighed against Billy's *beaux yeux*—Billy, with his long, lean lines, and sleek, well-brushed head, and the sparkling, laughing eyes that used to grow so tender when he looked at her. Thinking of Billy made her heart beat fast, and she re-read the lines he had written her in the letter received that morning: "In two months my leave is due, then I am coming for my answer." What should she say? What should she write to him? Billy was a younger son, and could never expect more than £800 a year—oh, if she only could decide. . . . Then her thoughts went back to the amber necklace. . . . How sweet of Billy to send it. And who, she wondered, was the lady Heart of the Plum Blossom? What was she like? Why did she die? And did she love

the amber and jade, too? And, musing, she curled up comfortably like a little cat in the corner of the deep window seat. . . . Jade and amber! Amber and jade! What lovely colours they were. . . . And what a curious scent there seemed to be in the room—Heart of the Plum Blossom—yes—that must be it; and the fair head drooped lower and lower, grey eyes closing.

Plum Blossom—the scent was growing stronger and stronger.

In the corner of the secluded courtyard the old plum-tree had stood for centuries. Its snow-white blossoms came each spring to make a perfect bower of beauty by the grey, lichen-covered walls. So high they were, those walls of the palace of the great Mandarin Chang Liu, in far off Chungking, that even the plum-tree's branches hardly reached the top. They stood out, grey and foreboding, against the brilliant cloudless sky. The blossoms were so thick on the plum-tree, and later there were so many shining dark green leaves, that during the hottest days there was always coolness beneath.

The ladies of Chang Liu's household, even in the depth of summer, would bring their work to sit in its shade. They all loved the great plum-tree, but best of all the little girl-wife from Canton loved the old tree. So much so that, though she was dying, when they brought the tiny baby girl to her and asked what name the child was to have, she told them, "Heart of the Plum Blossom." "And," she begged Chang Liu, "do not bind her feet; let her be like her mother! I am of the ancient Hakka tribe, and my feet were never bound. Do not bind hers." And because he had loved her very much in his way, the great Mandarin Chang Liu promised. And the spirit of the little girl-wife passed contented to join those of her ancestors.

And Hsin Li Hua grew up and played under the plum-tree in the courtyard, and in the gardens of the palace, and because her feet were not bound after the fashion of the high-born Chinese women, she raced and climbed, and rode and hunted with the boys of Chang Liu's household, and she grew up straight and tall and beautiful, and the women whispered that she was more lovely than any in the great household. And her old amah, who had been her mother's amah, too, told her, "One day you will be a very great Tai Tai, perhaps even chosen for the young Emperor."

But something of the independence of her brothers seemed to have grown with the girl, and she would shake



her head, telling her old amah she did not want to be the Emperor's wife, but would choose her own husband. And she would laugh and dance away to chase the purple butterflies.

From the age of six her education began, and she was taught to paint and draw with a fine camel's-hair brush the many thousand characters necessary to write the Chinese language; to read the classics, and to learn by heart the hundred sayings of Confucius (for these a high-born lady must know); to embroider with silks of every colour scenes from the lives of Manchu heroes; to play the lute, and sing the songs of ancient China in a quaint nasal voice. All this did she learn to do and more besides, so that at the age of fifteen she was known to be the most wise as well as the most beautiful maiden in all the great province of the Four Rivers.

One day there was much excitement in the palace of Chang Liu. The Emperor was coming to visit the province, and there would be feasts and processions, and many wonderful things for the ladies to see, even if only from behind their latticed windows, or through the silken curtains of their palanquins, and they laughed and chattered like so many magpies, bidding their amahs prepare their best embroidered robes, and oil their long black hair in preparation for the festivities.

The night of the Emperor's arrival came, and a great banquet was given in the yamen by the powerful Chang Liu. Five hundred guests sat down in the banquetting-hall—princes, nobles, and ministers of the Imperial Court. They were served at table by a thousand serving men and eunuchs of the palace.

A thousand different dishes Chang Liu gave his guests: lark's-tongues stewed in peach-syrup, whole wild boars garnished with fat capons and stuffed with figs, and a special stew of seaweed preserved in spice, which is known as birds'-nest soup—all these being dishes of ancient China, dishes that only a very great Mandarin can give. And he served them hot spiced wine in wonderful porcelain jars, each jar worth thousands of taels, and to each guest he made a present of the jar. Only to the Emperor he gave nothing, saying with a courtly bow that he had reserved the greatest treasure of his house for his Imperial Lord and Master, if he would but deign to accept it; and he waved his hand with the long finger-nails, and lifting his thumb upon which he wore a jade ring, the great doors were thrown open, and Hsin Li Hua stood on the threshold!

Sullen she looked, but very beautiful. Tall and slim, with her jet black hair done high in two great

wings, and covered by the traditional headdress of pearls and kingfisher feathers set in silver, with two large green jade pins. Fair and sullen she stood there, hands clasped, head bowed, in silken robe of gold and peacock blue. Then she advanced into the room, the gorgeous robe shimmering under the thousand lights, and stood before her father. And the Emperor, her beauty mounting to his brain, seized a cup of wine and bade her drink, seating her on his right hand in a great chair of ebony.

He gazed on her long and deeply, and Chang Liu smiled in gratified ambition. For this he had worked long—now would he be First Mandarin of the greatest province in all the Empire. But Hsin Li Hua sat in

silence, not turning her head or raising her eyes till, feeling as if something hot and violent pierced her eyelids, she looked up and across the table laden with the thousand wondrous dishes, and saw the eyes of a man gazing at her. Intense pity and love were in those eyes, and she knew that their message was for her. Her own dropped, nor did she raise them again till bidden by her father to retire to her own apartment. Then only did she look up and send one swift glance back across the table, as with a deep kowtow to the Emperor, she left the banquet-hall.

And the Emperor turned to his host and congratulated him on the beauty and charm of his daughter, the Lady Hsin Li Hua. And he ordered that a string of a thousand pearls from the Imperial treasure-chests be sent forthwith to the maiden, decreeing that in two days she should be received with all honour into his royal household.

The following morning Hsin Li Hua received two presents. The first was borne in by twenty eunuchs in the imperial yellow livery—a thousand gleaming pearls enclosed in a casket of

*cloisonné*; the second, the old amah brought secretly to her. It was a package wrapped in silken paper bearing the seal of Woo Ling, the Captain of the Emperor's bodyguard; and when, with trembling fingers, she broke the cord, out fell a jade and amber necklace.

Orange amber beads with jade rings in between, and three great blocks of jade hanging on a silken tassel, and on the very end block the Lady Hsin read the following Chinese characters: "Hsin" "Li" "Hua"—her name—and "Chang Chiu," which means "For Everlasting Time."

The pearls she twisted thrice round her throat, looking proudly at the vision the burnished sheet of



And the Emperor, her beauty mounting to his brain, seized a cup of wine and bade her drink.



silver showed her, but the amber and jade she kissed and hid in her bosom.

And the next day she proceeded to Peking, where she was installed in the Imperial Palace.

A year had passed. It was the time of the fifth moon, and the scent of lotus lay heavy on the air. Deep in the heart of the Forbidden City Hsin Li Hua sat in her island pavilion. Around her lay the lake, a mass of lotus-blossoms and floating lilies fringed by bamboo groves and clumps of Japanese iris, and surrounded by the park of the Imperial Palace.

Far away above the huge pink walls the eyes of Hsin Li Hua dwelt upon the Eastern hills with their white temples and towering pagodas, while flocks of pigeons raced through the turquoise sky, a vision of beauty and a symphony of sweet music, as the air rushed through the tiny whistles attached to their wings.

Hsin Tai Tai, as she was now, was a very great Tai Tai, as her old amah had foretold, the wife of the young Emperor and the first lady in the land. Not for long, though, had her beauty held sway over the fickle heart of the effete young monarch. Now a new favourite whiled away his days and nights—a maiden from far-off Turkestan, taken prisoner in a raid and sent as spoil of war by the victorious General to his Imperial master.

It was three months now since the Lady Hsin had seen her Royal Lord—gone were the pearls, and round her slim throat glowed the jade and amber necklace, swaying with each swift movement. Though her pride might be hurt, her heart was glad. Not to be Empress was her destiny, for no son had come to her; but her

fate was to love the man whose eyes had called to hers across her father's banquet-hall. For three moons the garden had kept their secret, and only the old amah knew how each night the hidden door in the wall opened to admit the Captain of the Emperor's bodyguard, Woo Ling, the lover of the Emperor's wife. Only the walls of the island pavilion knew of the rapturous hours spent there together when the scent of lotus blew in with the night breeze.

There was an hour yet before he would come, and Hsin Li Hua sat writing in her little book. With infinite care and much skill she drew each character, commencing at the right-hand corner of the paper and working downwards to the left. It was a poem she was writing—

Oh languid breath of lily-scented night!  
Oh lotus lying in the deep lake's heart!

Thus she wrote. The other women of the Imperial Household chattered and laughed together in the cool of the evening, playing children's games or doing embroidery on large bamboo frames. She had no love for the usual life of Palace ladies, and would often slip silently away to the island where her tiny pavilion lay hidden by the grove of tall trees.

Night fell over the gardens, the bamboos turned to eerie grey, the moon shone down on the lake and sent flickering beams to dance over the lotus-blossoms. An owl hooted mournfully, and some bull-frogs croaked to each other in the rushes. Then all was silent.

The man coming out of the pavilion a few hours later and crossing the curved red bridge thought himself unobserved as he made his way back to the door in the wall. He did not see the figure crouching in the bamboo



It was a poem she was writing.



He did not see the figure crouching in the bamboo grove.



grove, nor observe the glint of two cruel eyes following his movements. Wang, head eunuch of the Palace, had for some time thought it curious that the Lady Hsin was so often absent from the usual life of the household, and this night he had hidden himself to watch the island pavilion.

Woo Ling reached the high wall and let himself out through the secret door. The old amah crouching on the other side lay asleep in the shadow. He woke her with a tap on the shoulder, and gave her careful instructions. To-morrow at the second night watch she was to bring her mistress dressed in the blue cotton clothes of a peasant woman to the door in the wall. On the other side they would find a trusty servant of his who would conduct them through the narrow back lanes to the Chien M'en Gate of the Tartar City, where he would be waiting with fast ponies. Then they would fly swiftly away, riding fast to his fortress palace in the west.

Woo Ling left her and walked quickly away through the dark lanes. The hour was late, but there were still some people abroad: beggars lying half-asleep on door-steps woke up with a muttered "Lao Yeh, Lao Yeh, Master; Master, take pity on us"; muscular Shantung coolies ambling along with a monotonous "Hai Ah Ho, Ho Ah Hai," carried in their sedan-chairs late revellers returning home; a sing-song girl went by on a servant's shoulder. In the distance stray dogs howled at the moon.

Woo, however, paid but scant attention to these; he hurried on, and at length arrived at his destination—a small, low house at the very end of a blind alley. Twice he tapped at the door, which was soon opened by an old man, who kowtowed low when he saw who his night visitor was. "Ching. Enter, please, Excellency," he begged. And Woo strode in. Quickly he gave his orders. Ponies, the fastest in the city, and six trusty men were to be at the Chien M'en Gate at midnight on the morrow, with provisions for ten days. Rice and dried fish and lard, and also a feed for the ponies. Nothing too heavy, for they must ride fast and far through the deserted hills. Then he left.

As the dawn began to glow on the city, and the sun to touch the western hills with scarlet light, he arrived at the door of his own house by the gate of the Forbidden City. He was admitted, and, entering his own room, threw himself down exhausted to snatch a few hours' sleep.

A short time later, his door was flung open and soldiers burst in. They seized him, bound his arms and

eyes . . . and a few moments later, leaving the writhing thing that once had been the Captain of the Guard, they went, their work accomplished.

About the same hour in the Imperial Palace Hsin Li Hua was trying on the clothes the old amah had brought her. The coarse blue trousers and tunic amused her vastly, and she laughed to herself as she fitted the black cotton shoes on her slim feet, and examined with interest the brown pigment with which she was to stain her face and hands that night. All day she did not leave her room, but sat at the window musing and looking out over the garden at the roofs and towers of the city.

"For what had she been born—for what had lived? Had seventeen short summers passed over her head that she should be but the plaything of an Emperor and the love of Woo Ling? No!" she vowed to herself. "If the gods let her but escape and bear a son to the lover of her heart, she would train him up to be a man great among his fellow-men, and so would she cheat her destiny!"

So she sat and mused, waiting for the hour of escape—thinking, hoping, wondering. And so they found her when, by order of the Emperor, they came at sunset—ten soldiers of the Guard!

In his refinement of cruelty, he had ordered that she was not to know where her lover was, nor what had been his fate.

But she spoke no word; only with her arms outspread—flat against the wall—she looked at them. And the sun sank down behind the garden wall as they tightened the bowstring round her slim ivory throat, the jade and amber glistening in the dying

golden light. And the scent of lilies, which are flowers of death, and of lotus, which are flowers of love, blew in through the open window.

Diana Lancing woke with a start. "Heavens! How late it was! How long had she slept? And what was that faint-sweet scent which seemed to linger in the air? Lotus! But who could have brought lotus there? "Lotus—flower of love," and she looked at her amber necklace. "Yes, she would write to Billy that night and tell him that when he came home for his leave he need not fear the answer he would get.

So the jade and amber worked their spell, and out of the ashes of that old tragedy arose the wraith that men call Hope.

THE END.



But she spoke no word.



*Shakespeare-10 Nights.*



*"Real Life" Play- 20 Nights.*



MEMS. FOR THE MANAGERS: PLAYS AND THEIR

Shall we say, unfortunately, it is by no means always the most intellectual play that runs for the greatest number of nights—quite the contrary. Our drawings give some idea of the

DRAWN



*"Matrimonial Mix-up" Play—  
50 Nights.*



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70 Nights.*



RUNS—LONDON NIGHTS, FROM 10 TO 1000 AND —

Most theatre-goers prefer to take their pleasures gladly rather than sadly: hence the outstanding success of the lighter and brighter of fate the various types of dramatic enterprise may expect.

E. H. SHEPARD.

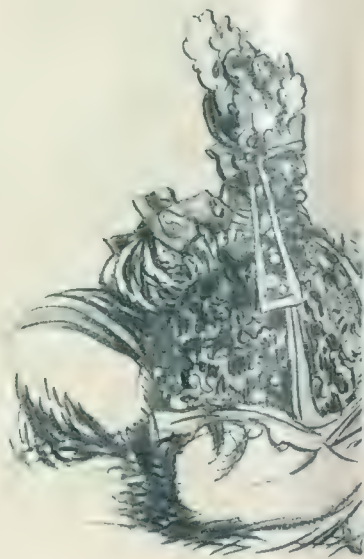




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Ad Nauseam*



RUNS—LONDON NIGHTS, FROM 10 TO 1000 AND —

E. H. SHEPARD.





By G. B. Stern.  
Illustrations by  
Chas. Crombie.

TWO days before Christmas, Mrs. Fordyce received the following letter from her son Reggie, who was the pride of the family—and a subaltern in the Rutlandshire Rifles—

MY DEAR OLD MATER,—I'm engaged to the most wonderful girl in the whole jolly old world. I'm simply off my chump with delight. Pauline Waring's her name, and she's on the stage. Not just a show girl, you understand, or anything like that, but really a stunning actress.

I do hope you won't be shocked or anything, but a man's got to settle down some time. I'm bringing her with me to spend Christmas at Sans-Souci—or, rather, I'm sending her on to-morrow before the trains get too full up. I can't get leave till Christmas Eve, but I shall come snooping down then. Meanwhile you will make her feel welcome and at home, and all that, won't you?

Love to the Governor.

Yours to a cinder, REGGIE.

Mrs. Fordyce read this illuminating epistle aloud at tea-time. It was received with clamorous excitement by the twins, whose real names were Hyacinth and Daphne, but who were always called Poj and Stoj, and their small brother Timothy; and with mild horror by Uncle Basil, a jolly, red-faced old boy of fifty-four, whose hobby was criminology.

"I say, Elizabeth, an actress! That's a bit thick. 'Pon my word, I'm sorry——" But his sister cut him short. She was standing up, with a very bright pink colour in her cheeks.

"Why should you be sorry, Basil? Do you suppose that Robert and I are old-fashioned people who shudder at the thought of an actress? If Reggie is simply off his chump with delight," she articulated delicately, "then that's all that matters. The only thing really worrying me is whether she won't feel out of her element, arriving here without Reggie. I mean, whether we haven't, perhaps, grown a little stiff and formal."

Poj was signalling that she most earnestly desired to speak. "I've got a simply topping idea. What you want to do is to prepare the atmosphere, heat it up a bit, for Reggie's girl, and add a few fancy touches, so that she'll think she's amongst her own kith. Now Stoj and I know tons about actresses——"

"I've met one," Stoj chimed in. "Blossom Dalroy; she smoked cigarettes with her feet on the table——"

"Clever of her," commented Timothy crushingly. "I smoke 'em with my mouth."

"You're too young to smoke at all," Poj snubbed him. "But you will let us coach you, won't you, Mums? To begin with, I think it would be a good idea to have all our meals off the floor. It gives things

a Bohemian touch, and it'll liven the servants up a bit. And we ought to throw cake about and catch it in our mouths."

"And I expect she'll like a bottle of champagne brought to her bedroom every morning before breakfast—instead of early tea, you know."

"And we must all call her Polly from the very first second."

"And have midnight games and pillow-fights in pyjamas all down the passages."

Mrs. Fordyce had been looking more and more dazed as the volley of suggestions hit her like pellets. She was really painfully anxious to be enlightened as to the ways and habits of that unknown species, The Actress; but Stoj's final decree compelled a faint protest—

"You young folk, perhaps. But your father and I couldn't possibly——" and she gazed appealingly at her husband, who was still quietly studying Reggie's letter. Robert Fordyce seldom thought of anything except his rock garden; but now that he was directly appealed to, he said—

"Well, my dear, I'm sure she's a charming girl, but I'm afraid there's no doubt about it, we're not up to date, and must surrender to the judgment of these youngsters. Turn our morals and our manners upside down, only make my future daughter-in-law at home, and leave me my garden as a sanctuary."

So Mrs. Fordyce subsided, murmuring: "Anything to make Reggie's girl feel welcome. Indeed, I don't want her to be afraid of us, or to feel that we disapprove of her profession in the conventional way."

Presently the other members of the Sans-Souci Christmas house-party trailed in from golf, and were immediately pounced upon by Poj and Stoj, and given a brief summary of what was expected of them.

"She'll be here by the four-nine; you will play up, won't you?"

"Rather! Would you like me to rouge, and use my lip-salve?" gushed Mabsy Cunningham. "I will if you like. I brought some down with me in case we had tableaux. George won't mind if I look fast for once, will you, George?"

Her husband looked at her vacantly. "Hot stuff, actresses, what? Fancy old Reggie!" was all he contributed.

"Of course they're hot stuff," cried the twins in despairing chorus, "and we're all so frightfully prim and proper. I heard old Colonel Rossiter say the other day that we were an acquisition to Marton Green, and you know what that means."

[Continued overleaf.]



## Putting It Across the Ghost.



THE LIGHT-HEARTED VISITOR: Oh, I say, old bean, have you heard the latest? Do you know Roland —?

DRAWN BY WILL OWEN.



"Well, anyway, Stoj, you can count on me," said Hugh Carter, a middle-aged young man, with a melancholy nose, and a dry sense of humour. "I promise to put on my pyjamas at any hour of the day or night and parade them in all parts of the house, if by so doing I can assist Reggie's fiancée to cast aside her first mistrust and shyness."

By the twins' orders, the whole family was not assembled in the porch to meet Pauline Waring, when



"Hullo, old thing, you're Polly, aren't you? I'm Hugh, but you can call me Biffles."

she arrived, half-an-hour later. She looked around in astonishment at the empty hall . . . and then Hugh slid down the banisters and alighted at her feet with a casual: "Hullo, old thing, you're Polly, aren't you? I'm Hugh, but you can call me Biffles."

The greetings of Poj and Stoj and Mabsy, as one by one they made informal, Jack-in-the-box entrances, were very much in the same strain. George merely giggled at her, and Timothy slouched past her with a curt nod.

The actress's looks were not the shock of rouged cheeks, crude golden hair, and pencilled eyebrows which the twins had so happily anticipated. Pauline was tall and slim. She had a pale oval face, a serious mouth, and big, brown, thoughtful eyes. Her dark hair was arranged in the simple "Helen of Troy" style, which, with the right wave in it, is capable of causing a ten-years' war. Poj, remembering Blossom Dalroy, was puzzled, till she came to the conclusion that Pauline did not wear pink-silk stockings and dance on tables, but went in for worldly-villainess sort of parts, and could probably look unspeakably wicked and indecorous when made up with a white face, scarlet lips, green sequin gown, a sinuous glide, and a cigarette.

Mr. and Mrs. Fordyce and Uncle Basil, obediently overdoing heartiness in their reception of Reggie's fiancée, were nevertheless secretly relieved that she neither wore bangles nor carried a Pom. "That kind don't," whispered Stoj to Uncle Basil, when he confided his relief to her, in an aside; "but she's probably got a snake in her suit-case, nestling among green crêpe-de-Chine underwear."

"Nonsense, nonsense!" exploded Uncle Basil, uncomfortably impressed. "Ah, here's tea. Good thing, tea—excellent thing. D'you like tea, Miss Waring—I mean, Polly? Cocktails are better, of course, aren't they? Excellent things, cocktails—or do you prefer whisky? Excellent thing, whisky." Uncle Basil thought he was giving rather a fine imitation of a theatrical manager. Ada, the parlourmaid, laid the tea with her customary solemnity on the round table in the hall, and then withdrew.

"Let's all sit on the floor! Ever so much jollier!" clamoured the twins and Timothy, and immediately began snatching up the cups and saucers and plates, the hot cakes and the bread-and-butter, and spreading them on the floor of the pretty little square lounge hall. "Bring the tea-urn, Mabsy; that's right, Mums, you shall have a cushion to sit on. What are you staring at, George? Shy us a spoon, somebody." And they all flopped down on the rugs.

"D'you always have your meals on the floor?" asked Pauline, wide-eyed. No doubt she was astonished, Stoj thought complacently, to find the habits of her own home circle so exactly reproduced in Reggie's.

"Oh, mostly. D'you want a meringue? Catch."

This was a pre-arranged signal, and everyone began shying meringues. George, always unlucky, received one full between the eyes, and did not improve matters by mopping his face with a purple silk handkerchief. Altogether, it was a bright meal, and Pauline ought certainly to have felt at her ease at the end of it.

Slightly bewildered, she retired to her room after tea to rest and unpack. It was a typical, slightly heavy



George, always unlucky, received one full between the eyes.

spare room that one would expect to find at Sans-Souci—mahogany furniture, thick carpet, rather faded wall-paper, bright new cretonne curtains, and highly respectable pictures of untemperamental cows and deer; but she was surprised at the incongruity of a bottle of champagne and a glass on the mantelpiece. She sat down to write to Reggie—

. . . Your people are being very charming. They are livelier than I expected. I simply love the view of the garden from



my window. It is getting dark, and I can see a tall pine-tree and the stars. I wish we were looking at them together. 'The floor of heaven is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold'—Reggie dear, *do* come down as soon as you can. Perhaps you can get leave before to-morrow night? There are so many things I want you to explain to me. . . .

Pauline slipped into a demure little grey kimono and sank luxuriously into the arm-chair before the gas fire. She took up a book which had been thoughtfully arranged with a few others on a little table at her elbow. It was "The Secret of Lady Jill," and displayed on the cover a bounteous-looking woman in scarlet, with eyes several sizes larger than her mouth. Another sample of the twins' thoroughness in detail was "Poisoned Pomegranates." Pauline returned to her letter, and underlined the word "soon."

The dressing-gong sounded. Shortly afterwards there was a feverish knock at her door, and George, in trousers, dress shirt, and collar, but no tie, burst in, crimson in the face, and obviously under the stress of some violent emotion.

"Er—er—I say, P-Polly dear, could you tie this tie for me? I can't fix the bally thing, somehow."

Huddled against the wall outside the door, Stoj and Mabsy listened tensely, to see that George wasn't funkling his share in helping to make the actress feel at home at Sans-Souci. They had agreed, in private conclave, that Pauline was still suspicious of them, and dared not quite let herself go. "We'll have to make the pace a bit hotter," said Stoj sagely.

But Mrs. Fordyce refused to allow dinner to be served on the floor. She said she would not be responsible for Ada if she gave such an order.

"Her evening dress is a bit on the quiet side, isn't it?" whispered Hugh to Poj, who was his neighbour at table.

"Oh, but *awfully* suggestive!" said Poj, though not quite sure what it suggested.

There was a certain amount of desultory bread-throwing at dinner, but nothing really startling occurred till bed-time, when Sans-Souci became the scene of a Saturnalia. All the doors of all the bed-rooms were flung wide open to the passage, while a gang of leaping, yelling figures in pyjamas dodged

indiscriminately in and out, brandishing slippers and bolsters.

Pauline, not wishing to be thought rude, joined in the revels, and even chased Uncle Basil into the bath-room. But Poj, watching her closely, suspected that she was not putting forth all the hearty vulgarity which doubtless lay coiled within her soul.

So she passed round the word for the hooligans to subside into their beds. Then she and Stoj, and their allies, Mabsy and Hugh, had a brief conference with young Timothy, whom they had selected to represent them in their crowning stunt.

Mabsy giggled hysterically. "What ideas you do have, Poj! All right, say it if you like. George needn't know."

So, nonchalantly lighting a cigarette—he was a dewy cherub of fourteen—Timothy strolled into Pauline's bed-room.

"Thought I'd drop in for a chat and a smoke," he said. "We hardly know each other yet, do we?"

He sat down on the edge of the bed, and swung his striped blue-and-white flannel legs. Pauline, sitting upright, a long brown rope of hair over either shoulder, smiled attentively, and asked him if he were enjoying his Christmas holidays.

"Oh, not a bad vac.—not a bad vac., at all. By Jove, you're a stunner, Polly! I don't wonder at old Reg. Old-fashioned wheeze, though, marriage. Not serious about it, are you?"

"What would you advise?" rejoined Pauline sweetly.

"Well, between ourselves, you've been simply bluffing about weddings and so forth to impress my people, haven't you? So I thought I'd just stagger in and tip you the wink. You see, mother and the governor aren't such dead nuts

on marriage as all that, or they wouldn't invite George and Mabsy to the house. Stands to reason, doesn't it?"

"Do you mean," said Pauline, with sudden and awful distinctness, "that your friends Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham—"

"Mr. and Mrs. be blowed! Mabsy simply didn't believe in it, and she does what she likes with old George. 'Fraid I'm boring you, though. Good-night, Pollykins." Paternally, Timothy dropped a kiss on her brow, and departed whistling.



"Er—er—I say, P-Polly dear, could you tie this tie for me?  
I can't fix the bally thing, somehow."



The next morning, loosely speaking, was Christmas Eve. A thick fog had draped itself over London and the suburbs during the night, and still muffled the windows in greyish-white, dispelling all jovial and seasonable hopes of wearing red coats edged with white fur and feeding the robins on a lawn sparkling with rime. So everybody got up late, and came downstairs in different stages of bad temper. The twins, however, were hopeful that Timothy's revelations to Pauline late on the previous night would have scattered the last regrettable restraint from her manner, and that she would presently appear in a ragged kimono and pearls—the natural and primitive Actress.

There was, however, no sign of Pauline. Instead came the sound of a car outside, and Reggie burst in.

"Cheerio, everybody! Got leave sooner than I expected. Had no end of a job to get here, though; the trains are all held up by this blighted fog. Where's Pauline? How did you get on with her? Isn't she a dear?"

Poj dashed upstairs to tell Pauline that her beloved had arrived. She came down, however, a minute afterwards, looking very scared.

"She's not in her room. She's gone. At least, her suit-case and some of her things have gone, and there was this on the mantelpiece, addressed to Reggie." And she handed him a letter. He tore it open and, with a perplexed frown, read the following—

REGGIE,—I really can't bear it any longer. People have thrown things at me, and made me have my tea on the floor, and wandered in and out of my room in pyjamas ever since I came. Besides, I think you ought to have told me *about your parents' lax views*. . . . Perhaps I'm priggish, but—I must own the truth, Reggie—the news about your friends the Cunninghams shocked me. We'd better break off our engagement. I'm sure your family meant to be kind, but their ways are not my ways, and I *won't* be called Polly, and it is an insult to put champagne in my bed-room.

I suppose I was a fool to promise to marry you, when I had known you so short a time, but I would never have believed that your home life was what it is. Although they say, of course, that even the suburbs are getting frightfully decadent. Fortunately, I have still my work. But I'm so disappointed—I'd looked forward to being with you at Christmas.

Good-bye, Reggie. Yours,

PAULINE.

"What the deuce have you all been doing?" Reggie's gaze dwelt grimly on the twins. "This is you, I suppose?"

"What's up?"

Reggie replied with the major portion of the letter, leaving out the wistful conclusion. There was a long pause; and then Stoj explained in a very small, quavering voice—

"Reggie, she can't be *really* shocked! Why, you said that she was an actress, and that we were to make her feel at home . . ."

Marton Green was four miles from Winborough Junction, where the branch railway connected with the main line. With any luck, she wouldn't have got further than the junction, with fog and Christmas mails holding up the trains. Reggie drove as fast as he dared, and swung into the station at about a quarter past ten.

"Has the eight-fifty left for town yet?"

"Not a hope for it for an hour or two yet, Sir."

"Good!" exclaimed Reggie, to the station-master's amazement, and dashed for the ladies' first-class waiting-

room. Pauline was there, sitting over an empty fire-place. The fog swirled in desolate wreaths on the platform outside, and she had nothing to read but an out-of-date time-table.

"Reggie, I'm so glad to see you; I've been waiting for hours. . . . No, of course, not for you!" Then, haughtily, "I fail to understand why you should have come."

"You fail to understand quite a lot of things, Pauline darling—mainly, that my people are dear, old-fashioned geese, whose idea of any actress is garters, and champagne suppers, and Ma in the background, and

dancing on tables, and all that sort of fancy rot! But they were trying to show you that they were much too advanced to be upset at my daring choice. It's no use talking to them about Repertory and the Greek Drama, and Shaw and Barker; they don't leave home much, and so if you told them that your favourite parts were Electra and Ann Whitefield you'd leave 'em just where you found 'em. Now look here, Pauline, the car's waiting outside, and I'll show you the family album with a photo of George and Mabsy's wedding group the second we get to Sans-Souci."

Pauline did not speak for a minute; her mind was racing backwards over the fantastic events of the evening before. . . . Suddenly she began to laugh.

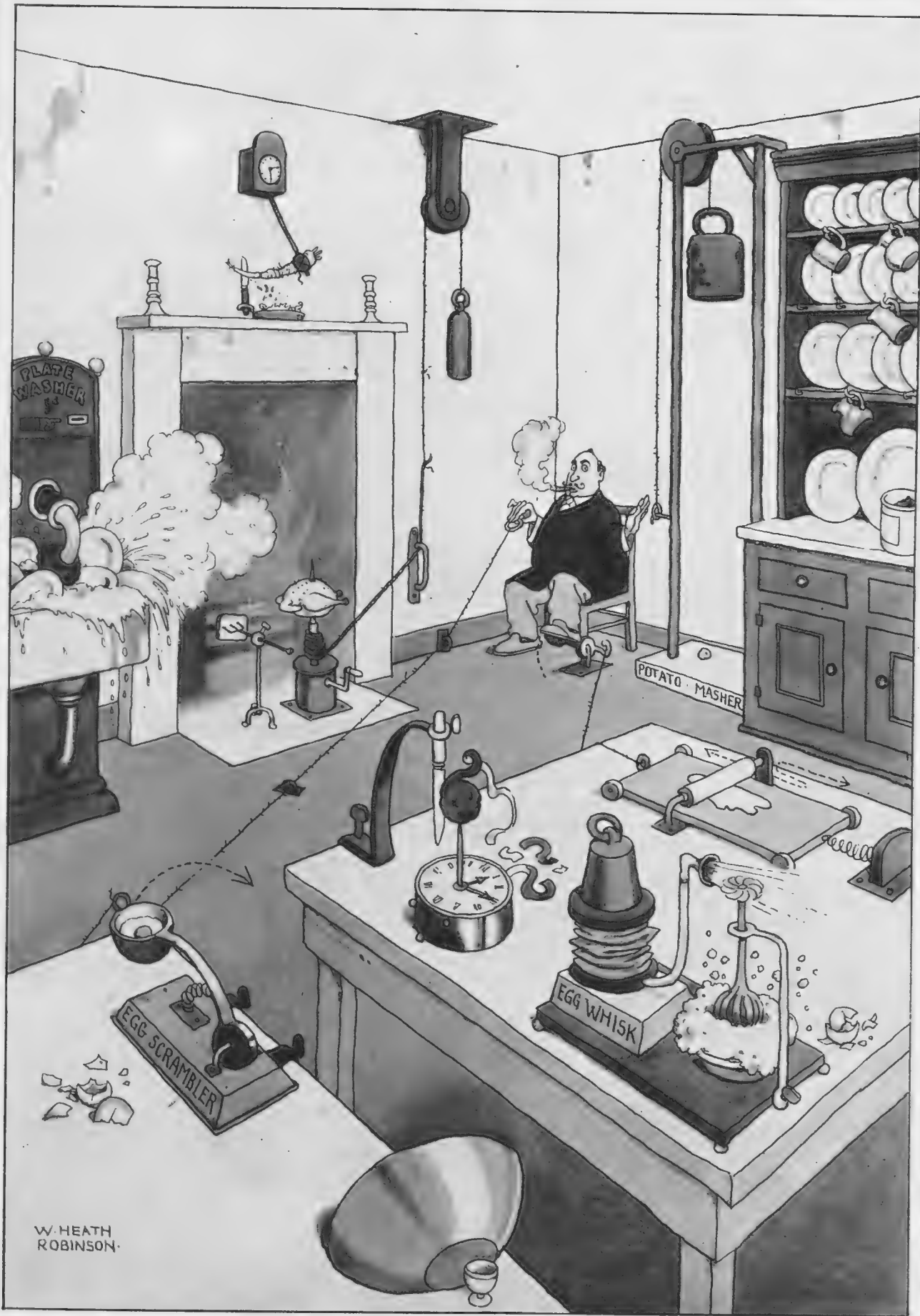
"Oh, Reggie, the innocent darlings! Why, that type of actress is prehistoric. But I ought to have guessed that all the while they were only just making me welcome!"

THE END.



"By Jove, you're a stunner, Polly! I don't wonder at old Reg. Old-fashioned wheeze, though, marriage. Not serious about it, are you?"





W. HEATH  
ROBINSON.

HEATH ROBINSON DOES AWAY WITH SERVANTS—PATENT APPLIED FOR BY "THE SKETCH":  
IN THE KITCHEN.

Drawn by W. HEATH ROBINSON (Copyrighted in the U.S.A. by the Artist.)

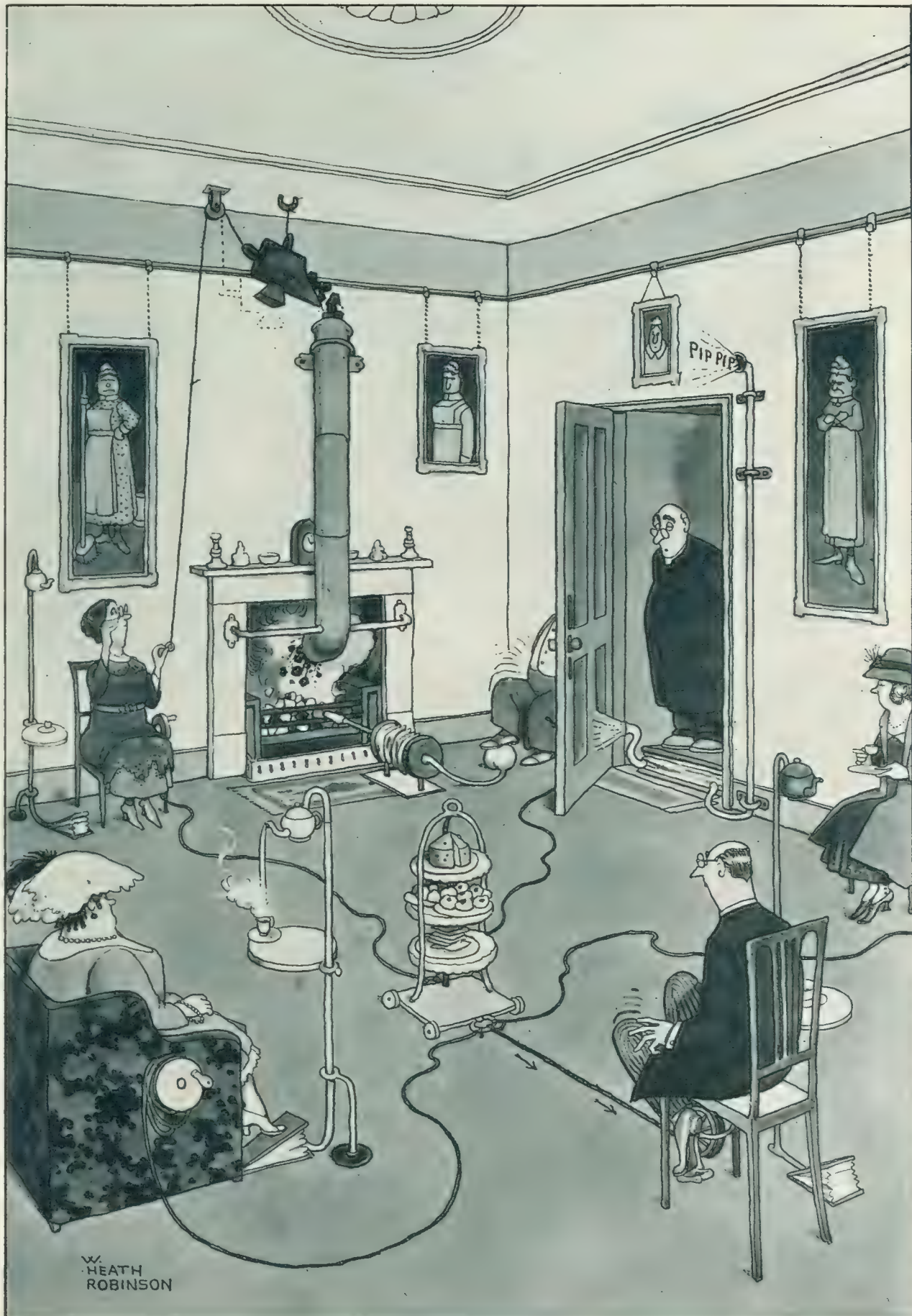




HEATH ROBINSON DOES AWAY WITH SERVANTS—PATENT APPLIED FOR BY “THE SKETCH” :  
IN THE DINING-ROOM.

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HEATH ROBINSON DOES AWAY WITH SERVANTS—PATENT APPLIED FOR BY "THE SKETCH":  
IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

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*"What's good  
goes with gusto!"*

**T**HIS is just what happens to Bird's Custard,—  
thousands of romping boys and happy girls are  
daily eating it, to their lasting benefit.

Bird's Custard takes pride of place in  
the Christmas fare. Serve it *Hot* as a  
Sauce and it is the golden crown for the  
Christmas pudding!

Bird's Custard (cold and well whisked)  
goes like summer cream with the mince-  
pies, and makes the Trifle a joy to eat.

There is a recipe in every packet, box  
and tin of Bird's Custard which tells  
how to make an inexpensive but most  
delectable Trifle.

With stewed or baked apples, tinned or  
bottled fruits, Bird's Custard is so delicious  
that no good housewife should ever omit it.

## Bird's Custard

goes splendidly with all Christmas sweet  
dishes and never disagrees.

NOTE.—It is the children's part to enjoy the Christmas fare ; but it is the parents' duty to thoughtfully bring  
together the right kinds of food, and to consider their nutrition value. Bird's Custard is all nutriment, and  
it is the "only Custard that tastes as good as it looks."

C. 104





## Strength and Beauty are always admired

**A**T the theatre, in the ballroom, or at any social gathering well-developed men and women are always admired. The beauty of their graceful, well-rounded figures — splendidly healthful — is irresistibly attractive and always the subject of favourable comment.

Would you, too, like to have a figure of which you could justly feel proud? Would ten or twenty pounds added to your weight make you feel better satisfied with your personal appearance?

If so, you should try Sargol. It will make you nice and shapely. Sargol increases cell growth, makes perfect assimilation of food, increases the number of blood corpuscles, and as a necessary result builds up muscles and solid, healthy flesh and rounds out the figure.

For women who can never appear stylish in anything they wear because of their thinness, this remarkable treatment may prove a revelation. It is a beauty maker as well as a form builder and nerve strengthener. Men increase their nerve power and strength, and develop many pounds of good healthy flesh. Sargol is not an experiment. For years it has helped to make strong, sturdy men and beautiful, healthy women.

Sargol is put up in tablet form and is easy and pleasant to take. If you want to have the winsome charm of the comely and well-formed, by all means give it a trial. Sargol is sold and recommended by first-class Chemists everywhere, or will be sent Post Free direct from our own Laboratories upon receipt of price, 3/- a box or 6 boxes for 15/-.



**THE SARGOL COMPANY,**  
10, Phoenix Place, Mount Pleasant,  
LONDON, W.C.1



# THE "SKETCH" CHRISTMAS PORTFOLIO



"TAKE A PAIR OF SPARKLING EYES."

FROM THE PICTURE BY LÉO FONTAN.

(Original in the Possession of Reschal and Delebarre, 21, Rue Joubert, Paris.)









COUNTRY (1450).

FROM THE PICTURE BY L. VALET.





ENGLAND.



FRANCE.



BELGIUM.



ITALY.

## UNDER FOUR FLAGS.

FROM THE PICTURES BY E. COLE.





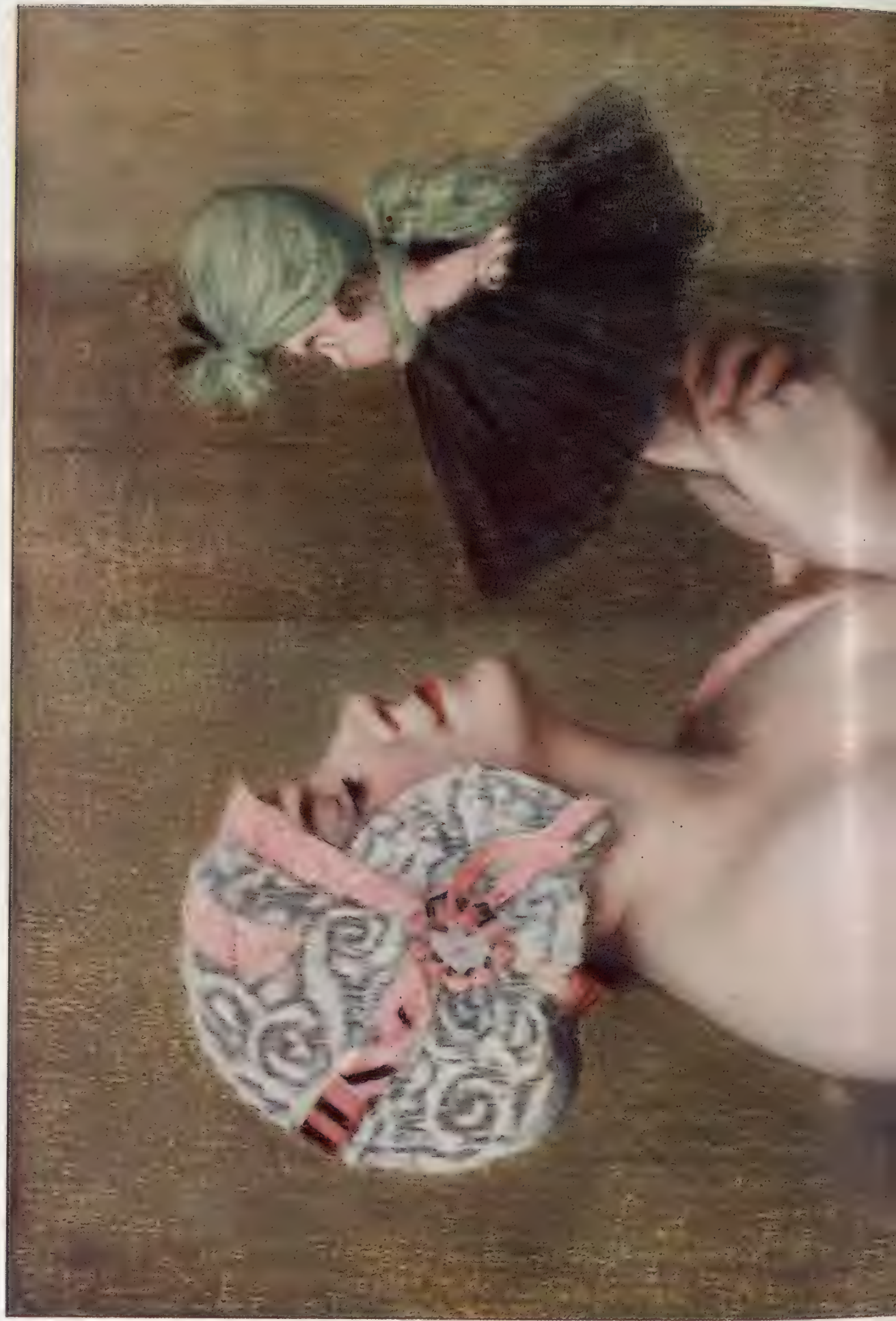
"SMILE, PLEASE!"

FROM THE PICTURE BY NEVILLE PENNY.



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"ISN'T SHE A DARLING?"

FROM THE SALON PICTURE BY PIERRE CARRIER-BELLEUSE.





## ONE OF THE SEVEN: A DEADLY SIN.

FROM THE PICTURE BY ANDRÉ LAMBERT.

(Original in the Possession of the Galerie Lutétia, 51, Boulevard Raspail, Paris.)



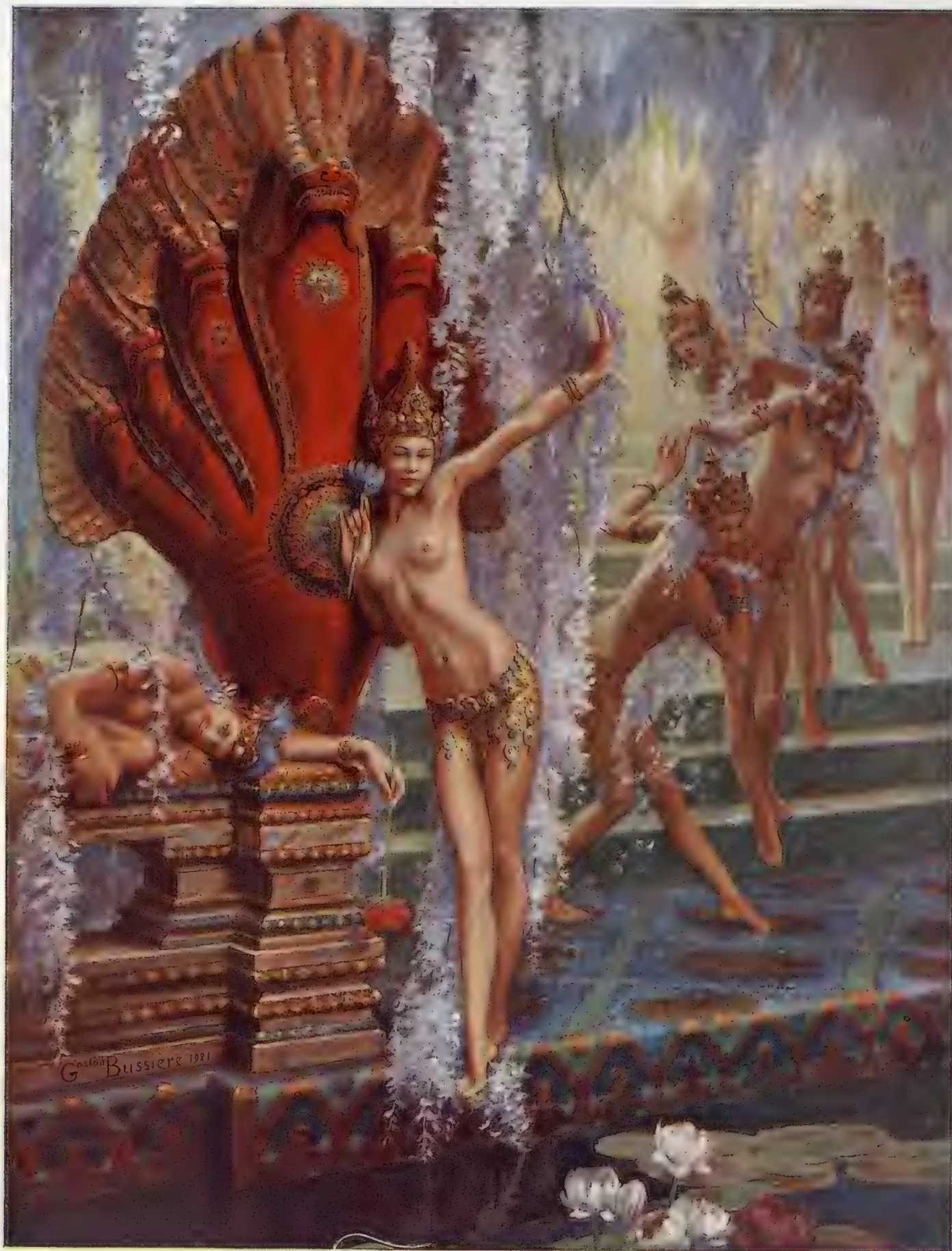


## ONE OF THE SEVEN: A DEADLY SIN.

FROM THE PICTURE BY ANDRÉ LAMBERT.

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### THE LOTUS.

FROM THE SALON PICTURE BY GASTON BUSSIÈRE.





THE ROSE.

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THE INTOXICATION OF LOVE.

FROM THE PICTURE BY SUZANNE MEUNIER.





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Sturdy Childhood.*



ABY'S development through the months of infancy—the increase of physical activity, the dawn of intelligence—form the most fascinating features of child life. The continuous progress that is so gratifying to the watchful mother depends upon the use of foods correctly adapted to the stages of development through healthy infancy to sturdy childhood. This is the characteristic of the system known throughout the world as

*Allenburys'*

For the first three months there is the 'Allenburys' No. 1 Milk Food—which closely resembles mother's milk. The No. 2 Milk Food succeeds it. It contains additional nutritive material, and is continued till the seventh month, when Baby is given the No. 3 Malted Food, the first step towards solid food.

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*Sole Proprietors and Manufacturers. Established 1851.*



## THE VERY DEVIL!



THE PIERROT: My dance, I believe?

SHE: Sorry; I'm dancing this with Mephistopheles.

THE PIERROT: Oh! that's all right; I bought you from him for two bob.

DRAWN BY STAN TERRY.





# The C1-Devant

*A Tale About Cold Latitudes*

By *Michael Arsen*

*Illustrated By WILTON WILLIAMS*



THERE is a quiet street in Mayfair; and this runs its decorous little length from a wide square which is fairly noisy to a long street which is very noisy. In this quiet street there is a house of a pleasing and elegant exterior, for, owing to the fact that its owner does not know the value of money, it is freshly painted every year. Many a leaden eye, in passing that house, has appraised it as "a nice little bit of property."

In the large bed-room of that house, on a night one December, three years after the world was said to be at peace, a lady was dressing for dinner and her maid was helping her; that is to say, Lady Beryl Trafalgar was sitting before her dressing-table reading a book, while Foster was doing her hair. Her hair is of that kind which is more remarkable in a *tête-à-tête* than in a crowded room—abundant black, shot with various and intangible shades of blue. . . . Spread out on the bed is the dress Lady Beryl will wear to-night, a dress of the colour of crushed orchids, with the pannier skirt lately discovered to be becoming by the house of Jeanne Lanvin. (But that, you understand, was some time ago.)

Lady Beryl is a charming person who has divorced two husbands and written three books of poetry, all very creditably. The men who have married her have thought it the better part of madness to go big-game shooting in Africa; while the men who have desired to marry her have wanted to take her big-game shooting with them. She is thirty-three years old and does not conceal it, except in her complexion. That is one of her seven "marvellous" virtues. The other six are: candour, courage, cleanliness (more important than you think in these days of facile powder covering), wit, tact, and good-manners.

The telephone bell makes a restrained but insistent noise. Foster finishes with the particular hair-pin of

the moment, then goes slowly to a little table beside the bed, opens the door of a toy house thereon, and extracts the telephone. Lady Beryl continues reading.

VOICE: Hullo, hullo!

FOSTER: Yes, who is that?

VOICE: I wish to speak to Lady Beryl Trafalgar, please.

FOSTER (*bored*): Who is that speaking, please?

VOICE: Now, look here, Foster, don't be a silly ass all your life! Eh? . . . Yes, you know me quite well. Just ask Lady Beryl to the telephone. She will recognise my voice right enough.

LADY BERYL (*looking up from her book*): Who is it, Foster?

FOSTER (*placing a hand over the telephone's mouth*): He doesn't say, my lady. A gentleman who seems to know his way about the house very well.

LADY BERYL: ?

FOSTER: He has quite a nice voice, my lady.

[*Lady Beryl goes to the telephone.*]

LADY BERYL: Ye-es? . . .

VOICE: Bravo, Foster! Well, Beryl, how are you?

LADY BERYL: I'm much better now than I will be in a minute's time if you don't tell me who you are!

VOICE: My dear! D'you really mean to say that you don't recognise my voice at all?

LADY BERYL: We-ell—as you're so insistent, I have a vague idea. You have the voice of a man I dined with once.

VOICE: Yes, you dined with me once—upon a time!

LADY BERYL: I said *once*, my friend!

VOICE: My dear, don't let 's spoil a wonderful memory for the sake of a numeral! Once, twice, often—what does it matter, Beryl, so long as we did dine, anyway? You were perfect then, and by your voice you must be perfect now. More perfect, maybe. . . .

LADY BERYL: But that's guesswork, and you can't found a love affair on guesswork, you know! (*He laughs.*) Not entirely, I mean. . . . But it must be a long time ago since I dined with you.

VOICE: Yes, a long time ago. I've been abroad. . . . But there are so few beautiful women, even in one's dreams, that I've remembered you.

LADY BERYL: Perhaps you were in love with me?

VOICE: You are standing by the bed now. I hate to keep you standing so long, Beryl. Please no ceremony with me. Lie down on the bed, Beryl—you will be more comfortable so, on that queenly bed!



LADY BERYL: But how well you seem to know my bed!

VOICE: By sight only. . . .

LADY BERYL: You are very cruel not to tell me your name. How do I know that I wasn't ever so little in love with you in that far-off time?

VOICE: Ah, I often wondered about that myself, but I never found out. You were such a dreadful liar, Beryl—but I could never find out whether you were lying at night or in the day. You were marvellous!

LADY BERYL (*thinking*): No . . . it's no use. I can't remember.

VOICE (*lightly*): Oh well, we won't worry about that! . . . But I want to hear about your life, Beryl. I've been abroad for so long! Do things still happen to you?

LADY BERYL (*seriously*): Will you please believe me when I say that I've only been in love once in my life—only once! Once upon a time I used to be inquisitive, of course—but now, do you know, I feel I know the answer to every question.

VOICE (*mocking*): But that's very interesting! So you've really been in love once!

LADY BERYL: Don't sneer, my friend, else I shall regret my decision to like your voice.

VOICE: Forgiveness, please! . . .

LADY BERYL: Oh, but it's not so easy as that! I would like to punish you.

VOICE (*quickly*): Then tell me of this one serious love affair.

LADY BERYL (*softly*): It ended—it just ended! It had gone on so long that I didn't realise how good it was, and . . . and I played the fool and lost him.

VOICE: But men in love aren't so easily lost! . . .

LADY BERYL: Ah, but he was a strange man, and loved strangely. He said that love was like religion, and must be done well or not at all. I didn't do it well enough, it seemed. . . . But tell me, what sort of fight do you put up?

VOICE: I don't. I grovel. I'm what's called a manly man, and all manly men grovel. It's the effeminate men who are the masters of women.

LADY BERYL: How clever of you to have guessed that paradox! We must meet again, some time. . . .

VOICE: You were telling me of your love affair, Beryl.

LADY BERYL: But that's all there is of it, my dear. One can't explain an ideal, one can only explain the failure of an ideal—one can't describe a love affair, one can only describe the end of a love affair. I loved him, I lost him. And I'm still alive—and so, I suppose, is he.

VOICE (*sadly*): And so you ended a beautiful thing just out of caprice!

LADY BERYL: No, not out of caprice—poor, helpless word, that! Caprice is the name disappointed men give to women's constancy. . . . No, I ended it out of caddishness. He said so, anyway. . . . But didn't you know I was a little cad? When I love a thing I grip it so tight that I break it. That's what men call caddishness, isn't it?

VOICE (*softly*): Men go mad. . . .

LADY BERYL: What did you say?

VOICE: I was only wondering what would happen if he came back. What then, Lady Beryl?

LADY BERYL: Ah, I wonder. . . . But the most wonderful thing about miracles is that they never happen! (*Briskly*) But enough about me. Tell me about your own life, you unknown man.

VOICE: There's nothing to tell about myself except that I've come back to England.

LADY BERYL (*mocking*): Oh, how serious you are!

VOICE: Forgive me, but I meant it seriously.

LADY BERYL: You have come back to England, then—disguised as a voice on the telephone. Why have you come back?

VOICE: One night as I was wandering about a friend's station in Ceylon I heard the whirr of the turbines of the P. and O. from Colombo to England; and the whirr was capped by a tinkling something through the still air—a long-drawn, silly twitter it sounded, which could only be the music of the liner's orchestra. A silly twitter, I say, but distance certainly did lend a strange grace to that musical scum of America. It stood, somehow, poignantly for home—for all that I was missing, Beryl! And so I came back to London, to find that all my friends are dead or married or in prison—except just you, the sweetest of all. And I'm ringing you up to ask you to dine with me to-night.

LADY BERYL (*regretfully*): But I can't, my dear, because I'm dining with someone else—whose name I know, what's more!



Lady Beryl (*looking up from her book*): Who is it, Foster?



VOICE (*bitterly*): I wouldn't have troubled you, only I thought you would recognise my voice. . . .

LADY BERYL: But I do—you are certainly a man I dined with once!

VOICE (*with a certain finality*): Well, Beryl, I've stepped out of the invisible procession of your past for a few minutes, and now I'll step back into it again. And what a long, long procession it is, isn't it?

LADY BERYL: Don't be a beast to me, my friend! Wasn't it worth anything, then, our friendship? Wasn't it worth while?

VOICE (*sentimentally*): Why, my dear, it was you who taught me how to talk on the telephone, and not just give and take messages.

LADY BERYL: It would be wonderful to have an affair with you on the telephone—

VOICE (*interrupting*): Did you say "to continue"?

LADY BERYL (*firmly*): I meant "to begin." But only on the telephone.

VOICE: Oh, I'm too old for acrobatics! . . . But suppose your wonderful man came back, would you recognise him if you saw him?

LADY BERYL (*laughing*): Of course I would! He had white hair.

VOICE: An albino?

LADY BERYL: Don't be silly—it was white because of some awful illness he had once. And it suited him divinely.

VOICE: Well, I wonder if you'd say that of mine, for my hair has gone white too. But perhaps you've lost your taste for white hair?

LADY BERYL: Well, it's very noticeable in restaurants and places when one goes about with it, isn't it? And, after all, discretion is the better part of an indiscretion. . . .

VOICE: Are there any other signs by which you would know this poor wretch? Any birth-mark, blemish, boil, or blister?

LADY BERYL: My dear, he was a lover, not an infirmity! He only had a small snake tattooed on the back of his left hand. . . . Please don't tell me you've got one! I simply couldn't bear it.

VOICE: I wish I had, but I haven't got a left arm. The war, you know, and fighting for King and cock-tails. . . . And if this man you loved telephoned you after all these years—did you say eight or ten years, Beryl?—would you know his voice again?

LADY BERYL: That sweet, gay voice! How little of me you must know to ask me that!

VOICE: I wonder what sort of a voice that could be, which you could recognise so definitely?

LADY BERYL: Rather like yours.

VOICE: Perhaps it is mine!

LADY BERYL (*laughing*): Oh no, no! My man had

a sweet voice, but yours is much harder. My dear, yours is the voice of a man who has played with many women. . . .

VOICE (*quickly*): Simply because he loved one unhappily!

LADY BERYL: Ah, but that's an insufficient reason for bitterness. . . . And my man was an idealist, too. But you've left your ideals behind in—Ceylon, did you say?

VOICE: In Flanders—everywhere. (*Bitterly*) It was in Ceylon I finally buried them, that's all. But to bury them there I first had to take them there—crushed and broken things that they were.

LADY BERYL (*sincerely*): Poor, poor man! And so now the only illusion you have left is that you haven't any illusions?

VOICE: But perhaps your man has suffered the same fate—perhaps he, too, finally buried his in a strange country; and then, because of the sudden tinkle of a ship's band, came dashing home—to ask you to dine with him!

LADY BERYL: Just because, after all these years, he suddenly had a whim! Just because, after all these years of silence, he wanted to see me! Just because, after all these years when he'd left me without sight or sign of him, because one night a childish fancy had taken me to make him jealous, he suddenly wanted to speak to me again! . . . Oh, no no! My man couldn't be such a fool. He was very clever at mending clocks, too; and so, of course, he knows that the hands of a clock cannot move backwards

to pick up lost time.

VOICE (*brokenly*): Oh, how efficiently you damn him! That would be your answer? (LADY BERYL does not reply.) Would that be your answer if he came back, like—me—

LADY BERYL: Just like you?

VOICE: Well?

LADY BERYL (*sadly*): He would be a man I had dined with once. . . .

[And there is a short silence on the line.]

VOICE: Well, good-night, Beryl.

LADY BERYL: Come back again, but—

VOICE: Good-bye, Beryl.

LADY BERYL: —but sweetly, Gerald! Oh, my dear, sweetly! (There is a soft click at the other end, there are tears in LADY BERYL's eyes.) Gerald, Gerald!

[She listens vaguely to the dead line for a long second, then helplessly puts up the receiver—and with a quick glance at the clock turns to FOSTER at the open wardrobe.]

LADY BERYL: Hurry, Foster; dress me! I shall be terribly late!

THE END.



Lady Beryl: But I do—you are certainly a man I dined with once!





## A Gift

The 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent is free. We even pay the postage. This is simply to urge that you test it. See for yourself what it does. Decide by the clear results.

Just send the coupon, then watch the benefit you get.

# Nothing So Pretty

as beautiful teeth—Keep the film coats off

Millions of people have in late years learned the way to whiter teeth. If you don't know it, we urge you to try it. Send for a ten-day test.

When you see teeth that glisten—teeth you envy—this method is probably used. It combats the dingy film-coats as nothing else has done. It keeps teeth cleaner, whiter than before.

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## Why teeth grow dingy

Your teeth are coated with a viscous film. You can feel it with your tongue. It clings to teeth, despite your brushing, gets between the teeth and remains.

That film absorbs stains, so the teeth seem discoloured. Often it forms the basis of a fixed and cloudy coat. The ordinary tooth paste does not effectively combat it. So countless teeth brushed daily have their lustre dimmed by film.

## Remove the film

Film is now regarded as a potential source of most tooth troubles. Under old methods of brushing, tooth troubles have been constantly increasing. Very few people escape them.

Film is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth and the acid may cause decay.

Dental science has long realized that some-

thing must be done. So diligent research has been made for effective film combatants.

## Now ways to combat it

Two efficient methods have been found. Able authorities have proved them by many careful tests. Now leading dentists everywhere advise their daily use.

The methods are combined in a scientific tooth paste, made to meet modern requirements. And millions of people have come to employ it, largely through dental advice.

The name of this tooth paste is Pepsodent. A 10-Day Tube is being sent to everyone who asks. So all who will may quickly know what this new method does.

## What science requires

Modern dental science also requires other aids to Nature. The average diet, rich in starch, deficient in fruit acids, makes them necessary.

Pepsodent meets these requirements. It multiplies the salivary flow. That is Nature's great tooth-protecting agent.

It multiplies the starch digestant in the saliva. That is there to digest starch deposits which may otherwise cling and form acid. It multiplies the alkalinity of the saliva. That is to neutralize the acids as they form.

These natural forces are increased each time Pepsodent is used. And that alone, it is believed, means a new dental era.

Pepsodent does in these ways what nothing else has done. Old-time tooth pastes, based on soap and chalk, had just opposite effects. Compare results with the old results, and you will quickly realize what this new way means.



## Children, above all

Children need Pepsodent even more than adults. Their teeth are easily affected by the film and starch. Few children avoid tooth troubles. Dentists advise that Pepsodent be used from the time the first tooth appears.

Men who smoke find that film-coats deeply stain. The use of Pepsodent therefore brings them most conspicuous results.

**Pepsodent** TRADE MARK

## The New-Day Dentifrice

The scientific film combatant, which meets in five ways modern dental requirements. Approved by authorities and now advised by leading dentists everywhere. All druggists supply the large tubes.

South African distributors: Verrinder, Ltd., 106, Adderley Street, Cape Town, to whom S.A. readers may send coupon.

## Watch the effects

Send this coupon for a 10-Day Tube. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coats disappear. Watch the other three effects. This test will be a revelation to you.

## 10-DAY TUBE FREE

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Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to—

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Give full address. Write plainly  
Only one tube to a family.

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"The Aristocrat of Medium-Powered Cars."  
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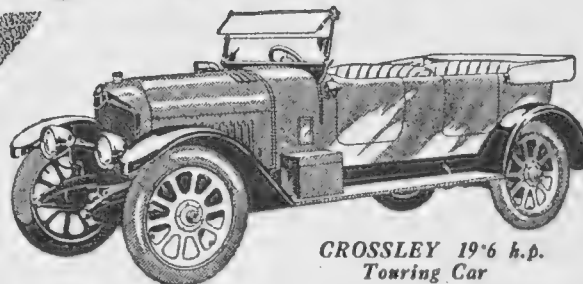
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*The 19.6 h.p. Crossley already gained so splendid a name?*  
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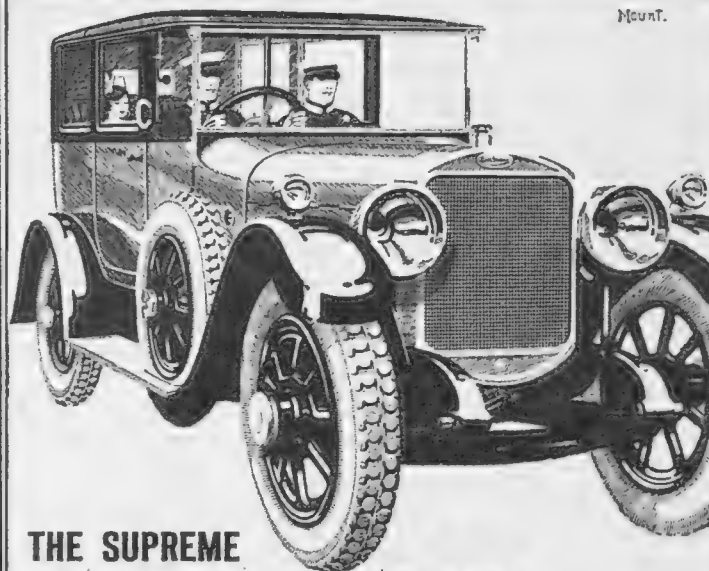
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*It is worth your while to write for booklet containing full description and illustrations of this wonderful new model, or better still let us arrange a trial run.*

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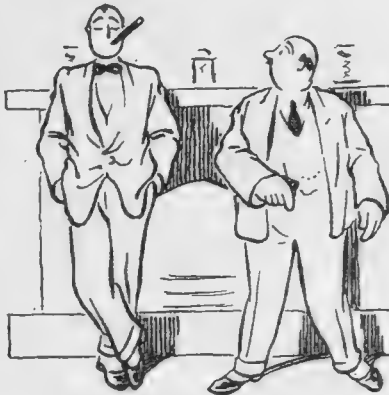
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EXPORT DEPT. 12, PRINCES ST., HANOVER SQ., LONDON, W.1



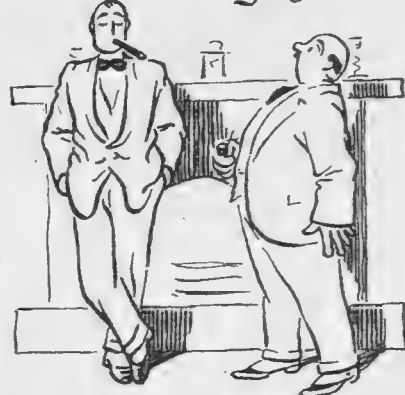
## HEATED!



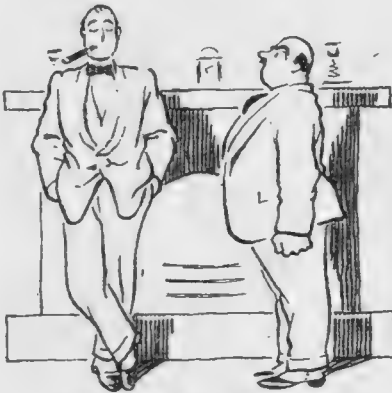
"Just had one of those  
Super-Excelsior Hot Water Systems  
put into my house."  
"Have you? I've got one too."



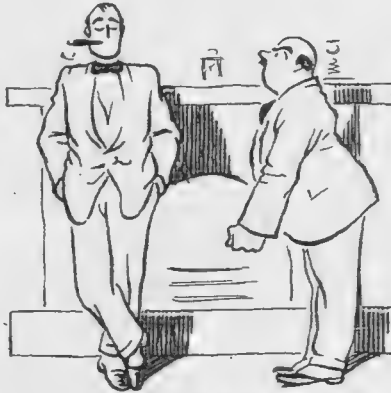
"Mine heats the whole  
house & the garage."  
"So does mine — and  
the garden as well."



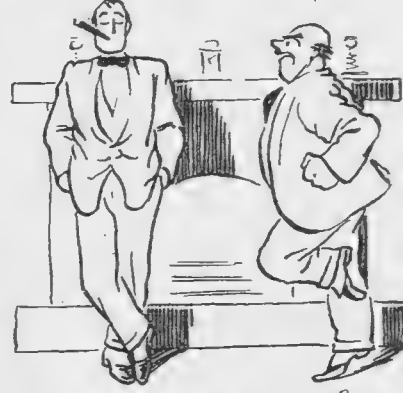
"Mine takes two men  
to look after it."  
"Mine takes three."



"Mine only burns the  
kitchen refuse."  
"Mine doesn't even burn  
that."



"Mine takes a year  
to fit in."  
"Mine takes a year  
and a half."



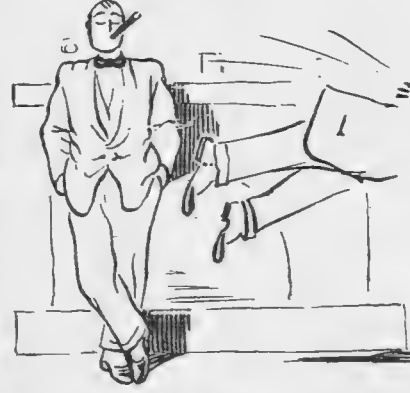
"Mine gives 110 hot  
baths an hour."  
"Mine gives 120."



"But mine's the largest  
size they make."  
"I know — mine was  
designed specially."



"Mine's later than  
their very latest pattern."  
"So is mine — with  
some ideas of my own added."



"As a matter of fact,  
mine's so new that it  
isn't made yet."  
"Yes? Well mine's so new  
that it isn't thought of yet."

THE SORT OF CONVERSATION FOR CHRISTMASSY WEATHER.

DRAWN BY FOUASSE.



## HIS ROSE!



THE BLASÉE EILEEN: Hullo! What's this?—The old, old story?

DRAWN BY MAB FREELY.



Xmas

Gifts



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has always been the supreme expression of a man's homage to a woman.

Pearls especially have an irresistible fascination for most women, and no gift to *her* is more certain of instant appreciation than the equivalent of an exquisite necklet of real pearls.

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have all the allure of the finest deep-sea specimens, the same texture, weight, and iridescence, and, most important of all, they impart to the wearer the wondrous charm of the highly-prized Oriental.

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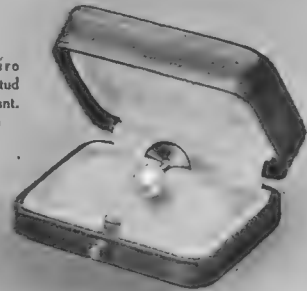
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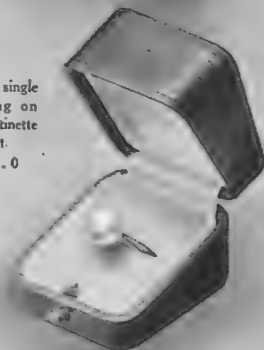
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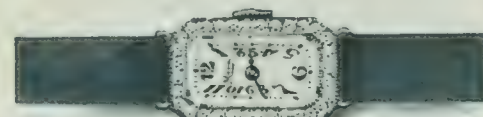
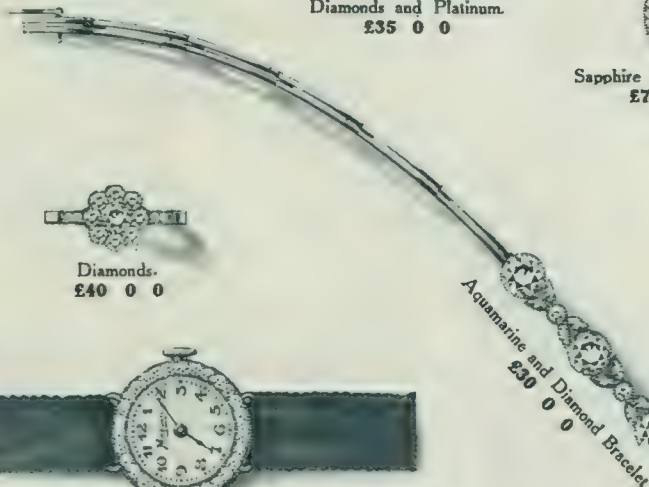
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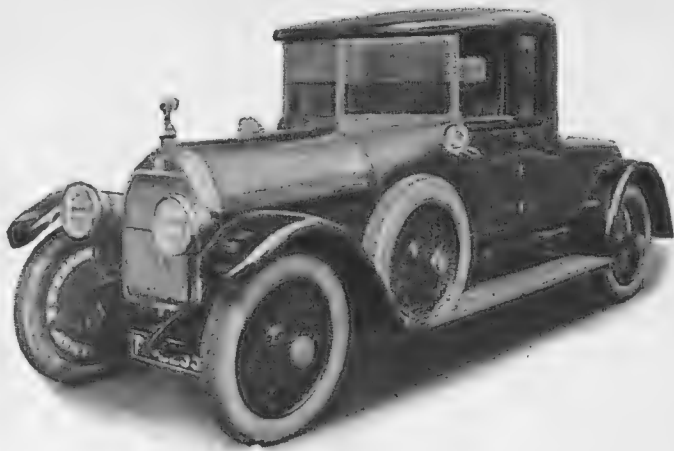
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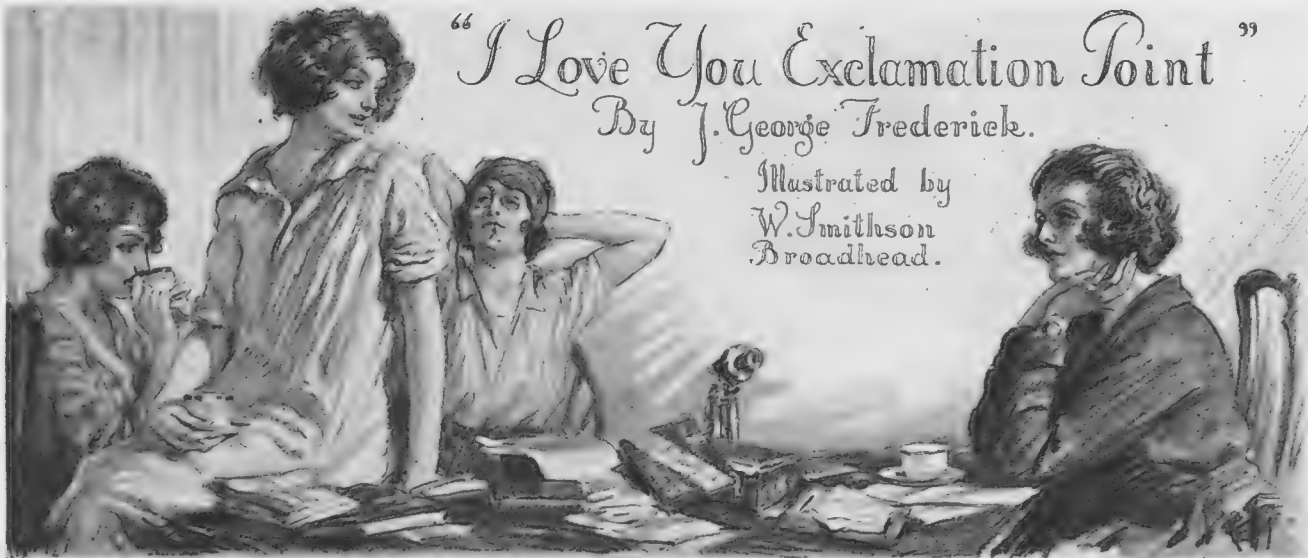
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## "I Love You Exclamation Point"

By J. George Frederick.

Illustrated by  
W. Smithson  
Broadhead.

IT was a crazy office—so everybody said who had ever worked in it. You couldn't call an office anything but crazy which had no office hours, no boss that you could notice, and boasting a little china cupboard in a corner from which dainty tea-cups came out promptly at four every afternoon when Miss Madden, the manager of the Mercury Publicity Agency, served tea to all, even to the office boy.

Some people, including Mrs. Haggarty, the cleaner for that floor, who looked in at some late hour of night, would have said that the craziness of this office consisted in the ferocious and cheerful manner with which the employees worked overtime, unmindful of the clock, and content with a mere mess of sandwiches for a meal. Certainly that did need some explaining, as you could note by the way the other tenants peered in the door curiously.

Others were sure that the office must be a crazy office because of the incredibly unsystematic way it was kept, from the efficiency engineering point of view. There weren't twelve square inches of clear space on any desk in the place, and every room was literally bursting with bulging, exploding letter-files—overhead, underfoot, to the rear of you, to the front of you, to the side of you. There was always a blizzard of papers, and nobody ever stopped to shovel a path. Poor Mrs. Haggarty was at first in nightly fear that she had destroyed precious documents after she had made a feeble onslaught upon them, with no more success than the New York snow-cleaning commissioner in the blizzard of 1920. But after a while she got hardened to it—just like the snow-cleaning commissioner—and she scratched away what she could and called it a night. About once a week they came to her and asked anxiously about some paper or other that had been lost, but she turned them a deaf ear.

Again, there were others who knew Mr. Armstrong Strayer, the owner of the business, who would have said the office was crazy because Mr. Strayer was a genius or a fool, according to whom it was you talked.

Sarcastic critics who kept one ear cocked for scandal sometimes put it as their guess that it was a crazy office because, with but one exception, Mr. Strayer had only women employees—all types and kinds: short, tall, fat, lean, beautiful, and homely—and apparently did not control them; and yet they all openly admitted they adored him!

But the employees themselves had their own ideas as to why it was such a crazy office—and you could tell from the way they said it that they loved it. For one thing, no girl had ever come into that office who didn't get engaged or married inside of six months. And what's more, three of those who had married came back to work again as soon as they were married, and one of them was working afternoons, and looking after housework and baby in the morning. One of them got up from her typewriter twice during the day to go home and see if the baby was all right! One of them was married to a man another girl in the office had divorced! Yes, it was a crazy office.

For one thing, there was such a never-ending stream of excitement in the Mercury Publicity Agency. Romance, "big business," and politics focussed there, in a way which made any other office seem like a country town, because of the publicity work being done and the visitors of all kinds who came. Ethel Barclay, one of the brightest of the staff, one day decided that she could do better with a bigger company. Of course she could! Anybody could have told her that! So she went—with the blessings of the office and of the head of the business. But in two weeks she was back!

"I never was so bored in my life," she avowed frankly. "There I sat all day long on this great floor with a hundred other executives, and only office boys, mail-carriers, petty clerks, and stenographers visited me. I was in the organisation, but I was the smallest, most God-forsaken cog you could imagine! Once or twice a week I went in to see my chief, and he was like a steel trap. I just couldn't stand it. Me for less money and a job under a man with some brains and a personality, even if I'm half worked to death!"

That afternoon, to celebrate Barclay's return to the staff, the boss sent for some ice-cream, and then, like the brilliant devil he was, told such an unceasing string of good new stories, and so deliciously teased the æsthetic, shy Mr. Candler, his assistant, in the presence of a client—a public official who had come in and joined in the fun—that it was only with difficulty that they got their plates emptied! And that night they worked until nearly midnight getting some rush stuff into the mails. Nor was it by the boss's orders, either. They knew the situation, and acted on their own initiative as a matter of course. . . . You begin, perhaps, to see why the office was so undeniably crazy. . . .

Mr. Candler was the mystery of the office. He



no more belonged in that nest of bright girls than he belonged in the "Zoo" among the grizzlies; and apparently he knew it, and took on what the Neo-Freudians call a self-protective colouration. He clung to his little cubby-hole, rarely venturing out, and when forced to do so, walked with a nervous, rapid stride, wearing a smoke-screen look of low visibility, and stepping a bit daintily among the inevitable litter, both of papers and of girls; for with the scarcity of office space, high rents, and sudden onrush of work, there were more girls than ever and more papers, but no more room.

Mr. Candler was a mystery, first because you simply could not get acquainted with him. If you talked with him, he appeared to agree sub-consciously with everything you said; and as soon as you stopped talking, he appeared to think the conversation was at an end, and moved on. But what he wrote when he sat in his private little office—which became crowded the moment he sat in it, for all his slenderness—was like the fine-spun web of a deft spider. He could turn out weighty economic articles, stories, advertisements, editorials, interviews, and speeches—with which more than one politician made his hit—without changing the tone of his voice as he sat holding the tube of the dictating-machine with his slim hands, and looking absently into space. Nor would he miss a punctuation point in his dictation, or mix up one sentence in five hundred.

The girls of the office made themselves so at home in it that they dominated it. It was a parlour, and not at all a man's haven, like most offices. Mr. Strayer was out most of the time, and even when he was there he was so adaptable a person that he never felt out of place. But poor Mr. Candler felt more or less constantly like a man who stays at home and gets in his wife's way, and feels in danger of being compelled to do small talk at his wife's tea. Which is precisely what occurred in this crazy place every day, for although Mr. Candler had for three years refused every day without fail—except on the few days when Mr. Strayer insisted—to join the girls at tea, nevertheless each day they asked him again.

It was like a ceremony. Miss Madden, who had bobbed hair and wore a smock, and could have snapped Mr. Candler's thin arms in two with her athletic arms, would say each day with the same particularly graceful smile, "Won't you join us at tea, Mr. Candler?" And the office would wait for Mr. Candler's faint tones, "No, thank you." It was like a game to try to "smoke out"

Mr. Candler, or to try to marry him off to some new girl in the office, or to make advances to him, on a dare. Yet in his own way, Mr. Candler was very "light on his feet," for he could retreat in a greater variety of ways and manners from the combined onslaughts of the staff than they could think up ways to trip him.

But one day, shortly after a new dictation-machine operator, in the person of a particularly sad-eyed and gentle-mannered girl, had been hired, the girls were dumbfounded to see Mr. Candler sharpening a pencil for her. Eight feminine eyebrows rose almost as one and gazed at Mr. Candler, who, observing, blushed as he

had never been known to blush, and fled precipitately to his little corner. It was what is popularly termed "a dead give-away"; utterly unprecedented, strange, exogamous, and revolutionary. It was rich gravy for the unprincipled female brigands of the office, this sudden flowering, right in their midst, of a violet of romance in the barren heart of Mr. Candler.

Having been thwarted in their own efforts to marry off Mr. Candler, they were out to thwart him. A cabal was instantly formed to place obstacles in love's path. Every device, fair and foul, was used to prevent the girl from talking to Mr. Candler, or from meeting him coming or going, at the office. It then watched in delicious anticipation for Mr. Candler's pussyfoot moves to accomplish even so pathetically modest a tryst as carrying to the girl's desk a cylinder of dictation to obtain a moment of perfunctory conversation. Cruelly was he denied even this by the seemingly accidental but never-failing nearness of someone with a rude interruption. The smoke-screen on Mr. Candler's face became less and less inscrutable, as he obviously showed his disappointment. Also he became more bold and

callous in his plannings to talk to her.

He appeared with his hat always about the time she left, with a studied air of accident, entirely inconsistent with his previous habit of staying in his office until the girls had gone. But one of the girls—or a bevy of them—managed, from the time the girl rose until she left the building, to be engaged in pouring a long and absorbing description of doings the night before into Miss Hathaway's bewildered ears, until the confused girl must have imagined she was listening to eight cylinders of dictation at once.

The look of distress on Mr. Candler's face was a sign-board of suffering for all to see. He was in a lionesses'

*[Continued overleaf.]*



"Won't you join us at tea, Mr. Candler?"





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*Eugène  
rules  
the  
waves*



den; eight lionesses were in his path, and he was apparently helpless.

In a tight situation we all use the weapons and the tools with which we are familiar, because they are the only ones we know how to use. Mr. Candler's delicate, slender fingers hadn't familiarly grasped any weapon or tool, not even a pen, for most of his adult lifetime. The livelong day he sat clutching the tube and mouthpiece of a dictation machine. He hated pens or pencils or typewriter keys, and on such occasions when his dictation-machine was out of order temporarily, he stood up idly and disconsolately, looking out of the window with a sense of bereavement, like a shoemaker deprived of his awl.

But what he could do with his machine and the magic cylinders of it was as artistic a series of performances as one could well imagine. He would start in of a morning, let us say, to prepare, on behalf of the Cotton Seed Crushers' Association, a learned disquisition to be offered

he was one of those rare publicity men who could make unnoticed truth blossom like a rose. He did not use either lies or adjectives to win his publicity battles; he used well-dressed fact.

Lifting deftly the cylinder from the machine after half an hour of this, he would put another on, and with the same easy nonchalance and the same far-away look in his eyes, he would then say—in behalf of the Democratic political campaign:

Two copies white and carbon double spaced line close to top suggested editorial headline in capitals The League of Nations as a Great Business Enterprise Paragraph World affairs are business affairs in the main period Disraeli capital d-i-s-r-a-e-l-i once said comma in a burst of temper to parliament capital p comma that world business was being left in the hands of pirates and pack pedlars instead of statesmen period

And then Mr. Candler would expound gently, until the end of the cylinder, the thesis that we owed it to the



Sitting, mouthpiece in hand, Mr. Candler, however, one morning seemed unable to continue his dictation; a thought seemed to obsess him.

for publication to the farmers' journals of the country; and this is what his smooth, cultivated voice would say into the glass mouthpiece:

Seven copies on onionskin single space line close to top released for publication June twenty eight headline in capitals Cottonseed Mash Declared Coming Cattle Food Paragraph Scientists have been giving considerable time to the problem of cheaper cattle food dash a problem very closely related to the H C of L capitalise, period Among these scientists professor Frazer f-r-a-z-e-r has comma it is now announced comma arrived at a highly important conclusion semicolon so important comma indeed comma that the quote bugaboo b-u-g-a-b-o-o end quote of porterhouse steaks as a luxury for the rich only may now be averted period

Then would follow details of protein content, and a great deal of technicality with which, to hear Mr. Candler, you would swear he had been familiar for years; whereas the Cotton Seed Crushers had only several weeks ago called on Mr. Strayer to plead that he should do something to help them, and had little or no data to offer. And Mr. Candler never mishandled a fact or propagated a lie;

greatness of the nation to take up our world responsibilities. Slipping off the cylinder and in a trice putting another on, he would proceed to prepare for the hardware trade papers some news items about a newly patented double boiler for housewives, or a very imposingly couched communication to the medical journals about modern practices in anæsthetics; or notices about a Salvation Army Fund "drive."

Sitting, mouthpiece in hand, Mr. Candler, however, one morning seemed unable to continue his dictation; a thought seemed to obsess him. His eyes quite distinctly did not have a far-away look in them; they seemed particularly shining and real. Perhaps the noticeable flush on his face set them off to advantage. Fifteen minutes before he had once more been checkmated in a very innocent-looking effort to say a few words to the dictaphone operator.

Suddenly he leaned over to the rack of fresh cylinders and examined one after another of them. He selected finally a particularly new and smooth one, set it snugly

(Continued overleaf.)





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**AN EXQUISITE CREATION BY "REVILLE."**

*A magnificent gown of rose-pink satin embroidered with pink and grey beads and heavily hung with fringe, to be seen in the Salons of Reville, Ltd., 15, Hanover Square, W.*





*In all other respects  
they are alike*

THE chief difference between a Necklace of Oriental Pearls and a Necklace of T'cla Pearls is that one costs a fortune, the other costs a fraction—one comes from the Orient, the other from a Paris laboratory—one is a secret, the other is a discovery—one is a source of permanent worry, the other a source of perpetual enjoyment—one is worn with risk, the other without it—yet on the score of appearance, they are as alike as coins struck off the same die!

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Coat*



BY APPOINTMENT TO  
HIS MAJESTY THE KING.



BY APPOINTMENT TO  
HER THE PRINCE OF WALES

PURE NEW WOOL

Weatherproof

&

Self-Ventilating

(renowned since 1851)



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for immediate wear.

"AQUASCUTUM" is an aggressive foe to wet and chill . . . a constant companion in comfort and healthfulness, and a helpmeet to good appearance.

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on the machine, with a delicate pat of his slender fingers, and settled back in his chair. Slowly the same far-away look came into his eyes, and his head assumed the familiar slant, and his voice started off in the familiar monotone:

One copy no carbon special white vellum bond paper folded Salutation Dearest girl in all this troubled sphere Paragraph I love you exclamation point paragraph As I sit here comma day after day comma talking into this machine comma it seems a joy dash just because I know you alone will listen all day long to my words period paragraph quote love's apostrophe s wireless quote comma as the poet Dowson capital d-o-w-s-o-n put it comma is the term that might be applied to this dictation machine comma don't you think so interrogation point I seem to have no other way of reaching you period I may be discoursing about cotton mash semicolon urging to contribute to the doughnut d-o-u-g-h-n-u-t fund comma or pleading for a candidate comma but my inner voice seems always aware that I'm really talking to the only woman I ever cared about period If I could only hear your voice in return exclamation point I almost fear to ask you whether you care for me comma because perhaps you have not heard anything in my voice but cotton mash or candidates period If you do like me a little comma won't you to-morrow before the girls come in dictate a little answer on this cylinder and put it on my desk so I can put it on my cylinder and listen to your voice interrogation point It will be wonderful period Please believe me to be sincerely in earnest period

Gravely Mr. Candler lifted the wax cylinder from the machine—having used up not quite half of the surface—and placed it on the tray with the five or six other cylinders. The half-asleep office boy came in after a bit and took them out—rather roughly handling the tray, to the exquisite pain of Mr. Candler.

That evening the girls in the office as usual bustled off with Miss Hathaway in their midst, but Mr. Candler made no move to see her.

As he walked with his light step to his office the next morning, no one saw any difference in Mr. Candler's demeanour. But when he saw on his desk a lone cylinder his eyes sparkled, and slipping it on his machine and reversing its levers for listening instead of dictating, he held the mouthpiece to his ear, his eyelids fluttering, as with a scraping whirr the needle found the right place, subjoining his own dictation, where a new dictation had been put on the cylinder. A very small voice said:

No copy no carbon use only memory no salutation I do like you comma and I must admire you period I could not help that semicolon your work compels it period Sometimes I have thought four asterisks and wondered five asterisks I wish dash but then again comma you may really only be amusing yourself period

Twice, three times, four times, Mr. Candler listened to this cylinder, until the wax began to wear down. There was still plenty of room on the cylinder, so he

placed it for dictation. In the same workaday voice he said:

One copy no carbon special white vellum bond Salutation My Precious Girl Paragraph I knew your voice would be like that dash like a Columbine capital C-o-l-u-m-b-i-n-e in some far hyphen off garden of the moon period I wish you had kept on talking until you quote ran off the cylinder end quote period What did you wish interrogation point and why did you wonder interrogation point I repeat comma I love you exclamation point

For several weeks there were many more cylinders shaved than the ordinary work of the office called for, but watchful as were the clever cordons of females in the office, they saw only "business as usual" and not a single move on Mr. Candler's part.

"He's getting over it," grinned Ethel Barclay to the other girls one day. "He's dictating work like mad these days. Nothing like hard work to nip romance!"

Now it happens in a crazy office like that of the Mercury Publicity Service that all sorts of sudden emergencies arise; and one evening, when Mr. Armstrong Strayer, the head of the business, was at dinner, he was appealed to by a prominent woman conducting a most worthy "drive," to raise money for the stricken of Europe. "There've been so many, many drives," she complained, "and I've been unable to raise money enough to speak about, and we must close this week. It's dreadful. Won't you think up something bright at once that will get us some publicity?"

And having a heart, Mr. Armstrong Strayer did think of something that might persuade editors to give the cause a little space. He went to his office late that evening to dictate it to the machine before the ideas vanished from his mind. The office was closed, but he rummaged about to find some cylinders. He found

one in the operator's desk, and put it on his machine. He was about to talk into the mouthpiece, when, to his astonishment, the cylinder began to talk. It said:

One copy no carbon special white vellum bond Salutation My Darling Helen Paragraph A little poem of Rossetti's capital r-o-s-s-e-t-t-i apostrophe s which I read last night comma and which I want to whisper in your ear as my own words to you comma determined me to ask you comma without further delay comma to marry me period I know now that it would be unutterable u-n-u-t-t-e-r-a-b-l-e folly to try to go through life without you period I love you exclamation point dash love you exclamation point When will you marry me interrogation point I have only a meagre salary comma but Mr. Strayer once said I might hope to be taken into the firm period Please don't delay answering me double exclamation point

Mr. Strayer heard the machine rasp at this point, and presumed the message was finished, and smiled in



He was about to talk into the mouthpiece, when, to his astonishment, the cylinder began to talk.



great enjoyment. But in another moment a small voice came from the cylinder, which Mr. Strayer at once recognised:

No copy no carbon write it on your heart Salutation Dearest Poet hyphen Spirit Paragraph There is nothing in the world more beautiful to me to think of than for you and me to spend our lives together period I love you so much five asterisks that it hurts period Yes I will marry you whenever you feel you can period Under the circumstances comma I promise you I will manage oh so economically period Now comma I'm going to send you kisses on this cylinder dash just listen carefully k-i-s-s-s-s-s—

At this point Mr. Strayer jumped up, shut off the machine, and strode around the room. In a few moments he came back, saw that there was still space on the cylinder for further dictation, and then he spoke into the machine:

Two copies and one carbon white vellum bond Mark one for Mister Candler and one for Miss Hathaway Give carbon to me for my files Salutation Bless You My Children exclamation point paragraph My apologies and congratulations on the same cylinder period I accidentally listened to this cylinder to-night while here to dictate a memorandum period I apologise period You happy things exclamation point May you have a wonderful life together comma and I know you will period Armstrong Strayer P S This will also serve as a memorandum that on September first we're going to incorporate this firm comma with you as vice-president comma at fifty f-i-f-t-y per cent increase in your salary period Also I suggest you both take off August at full pay for a honeymoon period

Several days later Miss Madden got from the boss a memo as to the spacing of vacations. He had marked himself down for July, and made a note that August was to be marked off for Mr. Candler



"Just look at this," she said. "Vacation for a whole month for Mr. Candler and Miss Hathaway at the same time."

and Miss Hathaway. Miss Madden looked sharply at it and then called one of the girls. "Just look at this," she said. "Vacation for a whole month for Mr. Candler and Miss Hathaway at the same time! What is the boss up to, after we've been so faithfully putting obstacles in love's pathway?"

It being a crazy office, and it being tea-time, anyway, the girls went to Miss Hathaway's desk, where she was demurely typing.

"Why are you taking a whole month's vacation the same time that Mr. Candler is away?" they asked, eight pairs of eyes fastened on her.

"Why, we're going to be married then," she said, lifting the earpieces from her head, in her mouse-like way, as though it were the most natural of things to say.

"Married?" chorused the baffled girls, aghast—"married! Oh, what a pretty one on us! Oh! Oh!"

Miss Madden kissed the girl, and the other girls followed suit. One of them was a bit impetuous and overturned a cylinder standing in its case on the desk. Miss Hathaway sprang forward with a little cry of concern, examined to see if it was broken, and tenderly tucked it in a drawer of her desk. The girls' eyes opened wide as saucers, as Miss Hathaway's face reddened guiltily. Four fingers pointed accusingly at the cylinder being tucked away. "It's his proposal!"

they said, almost as one voice; and Miss Hathaway did not deny it.

Just then Mr. Candler came out of the office with more cylinders. "Will you join us at tea?" asked Miss Madden, precisely as of yore, with the full battery of eight females an attentive audience.

Mr. Candler looked at Miss Hathaway, squared his shoulders, and said—in a distinctly new tone of voice entirely devoid of fear—"Certainly; in a few moments."

[THE END.]

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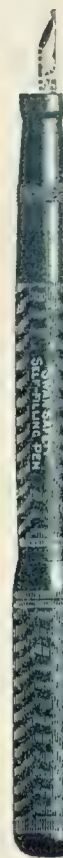
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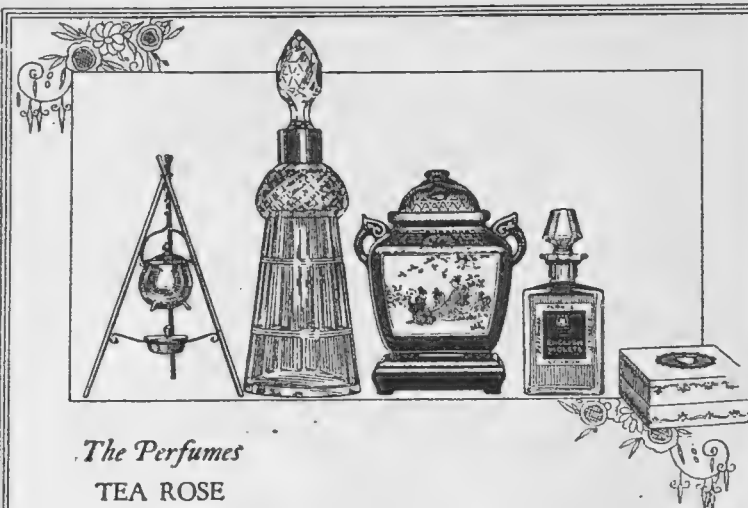
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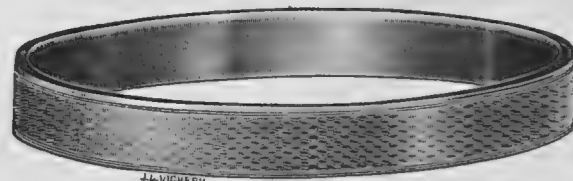
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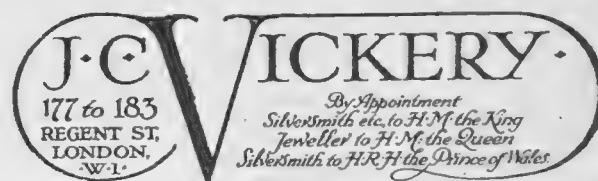
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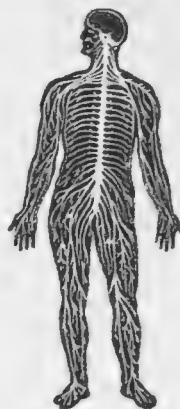
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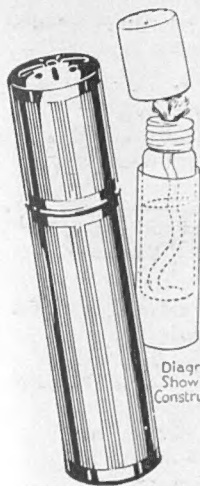


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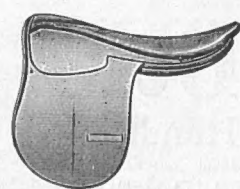
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